



JOSHUA TO JOB

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EDITED BY
W. SHAW SPARROW



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JOSHUA TO JOB

BEING A CONTINUATION OF "THE OLD
TESTAMENT IN ART" AND THE SIXTH
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1906

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EDITED BY W. SHAW SPARROW

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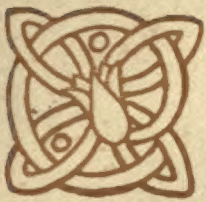
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THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL iii. 10.



THE INFANT SAMUEL. "SPEAK ; FOR THY SERVANT HEARETH." REPRODUCED FROM A MEZZOTINT
BY S. COUSINS, R.A., BY PERMISSION OF HENRY GRAVES & CO.

James Sant, R.A., Modern British School



JOSHUA · TO · JOB ;

BEING · A · CONTINUATION · OF · "THE · OLD
TESTAMENT · IN · ART" AND · A · COM-
PANION · VOLUME · TO · "THE · GOSPELS · IN · ART"
AND · "THE · APOSTLES · IN · ART"

EDITED · BY
W. SHAW · SPARROW



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• HODDER · & · STOUGHTON ·
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1) : LONDON :



PRINTED AND BOUND BY
PERCY LUND, HUMPHRIES & CO., LTD.,
THE COUNTRY PRESS, BRADFORD:
AND 3, AMEN CORNER,
LONDON, E.C.



1097358

PREFACE



IN this book the Old Testament in Art is continued, and the aim is to find a pleasant pathway through the most sinister periods in the Bible history of the Jews.

They are periods of dire tragedies. How great is the slaughter in a multitude of battles, and how many are the deeds, either full of a headlong ruthlessness, or else charged with patient and determined crime. If these things were represented in pictures (as they used to be, one by one, in the Bible illustrations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), a book repellent to all sensitive minds would be the inevitable result; because those very incidents that live least fruitfully in the memory would supersede the kinder and better events. In written histories everything of note should be recorded, but it happens frequently that prose descriptions are so vivid and so painful that they neither need nor justify a further portrayal by means of the thorough realism of the graphic arts.

It is with this principle in mind that I have compiled the present volume of illustrations. Here and there the ruthless character of the periods will be felt, but the bulk of the pictures form, it is hoped, a story within the province of religious art and not at variance with the peace that reigns in the permanent teaching of the Bible.

Painters, somehow, have been greatly fascinated by certain tales in the Old Testament which should not be renewed by art, and which cannot be given in a book designed for the family and the home. Thus, for example, the sin of David has received far too much attention, while David's penitence, like his punishment, has been passed by almost unnoticed. And this example might be followed by many others, so that the compilation of this book has encountered a host of difficulties. All the photographs of pictures published in Europe have been carefully searched by me, and it is amazing to note the complete success with which the different schools of painting have failed to detect the beauty of unhackneyed subjects. Even in their study of their chosen incidents artists show too frequently an

PREFACE

imperfect understanding of the Bible's pregnant and pictured brevity. For instance, when we see David kneeling in prayer by a Dutch bed of the seventeenth century, do we not feel that the incident portrayed might be described by many better titles?

Among the artists who have shown loyalty to the Bible text, Julius Schnorr should be remembered. He is not a man of fire like Rethel. Indeed, his talent is a modest one; it moves very slowly, it builds laboriously. But his 240 drawings of Bible subjects, when published at Leipzig by Georg Wigand in 1860, began at once to exercise a popular influence in Germany; and their fidelity to the Bible text is not a common example of resourceful patience. The aim throughout is to instruct the young and the simple-hearted; and from this standpoint they must be judged.

The Book of Job is interpreted rather than illustrated, for all the famous designs by William Blake are given here, reproduced in facsimile the full size of the original proofs. William Blake, like every man gifted with an overmastering personality, has had—and will ever have—many detractors. It is said that his imagination ran wild. Well, it is better to incur that charge than to deserve the rebuke which Charles Lamb administered to the painters of Blake's time, when he wrote his essay on "The Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art." Blake's mannerisms lie on the surface of his work plain for everybody to see. The thing worth doing is to pass beyond them into Blake's own atmosphere and unique idealism. If we keep outside his atmosphere, or if we permit ourselves to rebel against his most random panegyrists, we shall never reach the inner excellence and the life of his own sincerity as an artist. To understand Blake, we must live with him for a time as though we liked him much, as though we belonged to his discriminating devotees, like Swinburne and Laurence Binyon, like Rossetti and Burne-Jones. But whether he fascinates us or repels us, his Inventions remain something more than the most noteworthy that the Book of Job has yet inspired. They are also the most memorable series of works in sustained religious art that England has yet achieved.

WALTER SHAW SPARROW.

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Barrias, Félix Joseph, Modern French School. *See the List of Rembrandt Photogravures.*

Bida, Alexandre, Modern French School. Born at Toulouse in 1808 ; died at Buhl in 1895.

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Bonifazio Veronese, Venetian School. Born at Verona in 1491 ; died at Venice in 1553.

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Bonnat, Léon, Modern French School. *See the List of Monochrome Plates.*

Bouguereau, Madame, née Gardner, Modern French School. Born at Exeter, New Hampshire, U.S.A.

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Bouts, Dirk, known also as Stuerbout de Harlem, Flemish School. Born at Harlem in 1391 ; died in 1475.

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Brewtnall, E. F., R.W.S., Modern British School. Born in 1850 ; died in 1902.

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Brown, Ford Madox, British School. Born at Calais, April 16th, 1821 ; died on October 11th, 1893.

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Buonarroti, Michelangelo, Florentine School. Born at Chiusi in 1475 ; died in Rome, 1564

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Burne-Jones, Sir Edward, Bart., Modern British School. Born at Birmingham, August 28th, 1833 ; died in London, June 18th, 1898, at The Grange, North End Road, West Kensington.

"DAVID GIVING DIRECTIONS TO SOLOMON FOR THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE," 1. CHRONICLES XXII., 6 (p. 96).

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Caliari, Paolo (Paolo Veronese), Venetian School. Born at Verona in 1528 ; died at Venice in 1588.

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Dalziel, Edward Gurden, British School. Born in London, February 7th, 1849 ; died in London, April 27th, 1888.

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Dyce, William, R.A., British School. Born in 1806 ; died in 1864. Elected A.R.A. in 1845, and R.A. in 1848.

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Eeckhout, Gerbrand van den, Dutch School. Born in Amsterdam in 1621 ; died in 1674.

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Etty, William, R.A., British School. Born in 1787 ; died in 1849. Elected A.R.A. in 1824, and R.A. in 1828.

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Feti, Domenico, Roman School. Born in Rome, 1589 ; died at Venice in 1624.

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Flinck, Govaert, Dutch School. Born at Clèves in 1615 ; died in 1660, at Amsterdam.

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Manton, G. Grenville, Modern British School. See the List of Monochrome Plates.

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O'Neil, Henry, A.R.A., British School. Born in 1817; died in 1880. Elected A.R.A. in 1860.

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Picart, B., French School. Born in 1663; died in 1733.

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Born in 1820; died in 1900. Elected A.R.A. in 1847 and
R.A. in 1857.

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Poorter, Willem de, Dutch School, 17th century.

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Poussin, Nicolas, French School. Born at Les Andelys in 1594;
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Rembrandt, Dutch School. Born at Leyden in 1606; died in
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Rosa, Salvatore, Neapolitan School. Born in 1615 at Renella,
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Rosselli, Matteo, Florentine School. Born in Florence, 1578;
died in 1650.

"THE TRIUMPH OF DAVID" (p. 84).

Rossetti, Gabriel Charles Dante, commonly called Dante Gabriel,
British School. Born in London in 1828; died at Birching-
ton-on-Sea in 1882.

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Rubens, Peter Paul, Flemish School. Born at Siegen in 1577;
died at Antwerp in 1640.

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Sanzio, Raffaello (Raphael of Urbino), Roman School. Born at Urbino in 1483 ; died in Rome, 1520.

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Small, W., Modern British School.

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Veronese, Paolo. *See Caliarì, Paolo.*

Watts, G. F., O.M., R.A., Modern British School. Born in London in 1817, of Welsh descent, like Sir Edward Burne-Jones ; died in 1904. Elected A.R.A. in 1867, and R.A. in 1868.

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Westall, Richard, R.A., British School. Born in 1765 ; died in 1836. Elected A.R.A. in 1792 and R.A. in 1794.

"Jael and Sisera" (p. 43). "Nathan reproving David for his crime" (p. 90). "Joash saved by Jehoshabeath" (p. 110).

Wylie, Miss J., Modern British School.

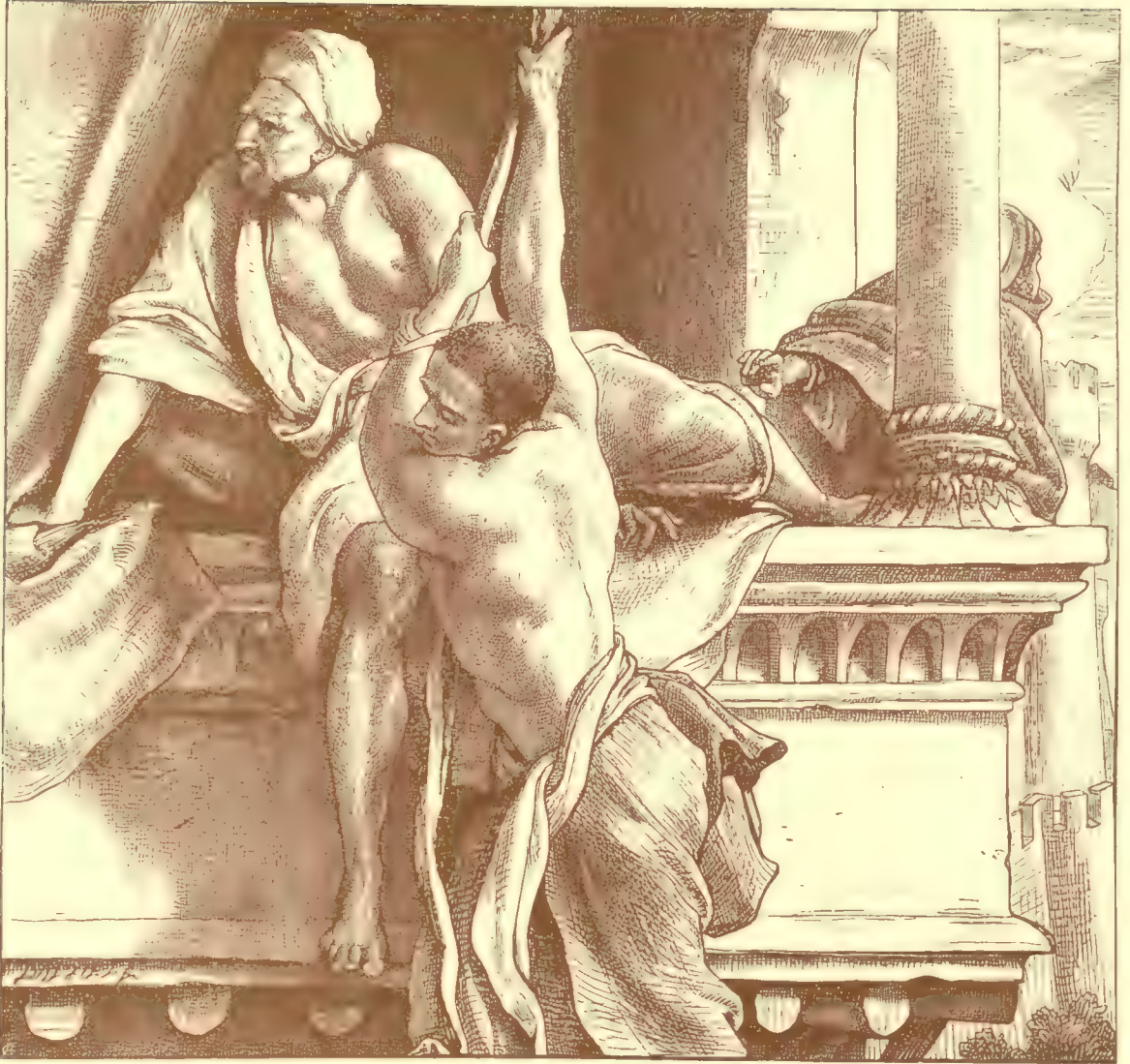
"Deborah, a prophetess, commands Barak to deliver the children of Israel from Jabin and Sisera" (p. 42).

Zampieri, Domenico (il Domenichino), Bolognese School. Born at Bologna in 1581 ; died at Naples in 1641.

"DAVID AS KING" (p. 88).



THE BOOK OF JOSHUA



THE TWO SPIES ESCAPE FROM RAHAB'S HOUSE. REPRODUCED FROM THE PLATE MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LTD. (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY, 1880)

Lord Leighton, P.R.A., Modern British School
1830-1896

Joshua and the Period of the Judges

By the Rev. Joseph Dobell, Canon of St. Asaph



WE know that the Book of Joshua tells the story of a conquest, of hard battles, of struggles and disappointments, of successes and final victory. It is a picture to us of our own spiritual battle in order that we may enter upon our great inheritance as the children of God.

The time of the conquest of the Promised Land was in many ways a rough and savage time. One of the kings who had to be subdued had amused himself by cutting off the thumbs and great toes of seven kings whom he had conquered. Such men as he were, by God's providence, to be overcome by opponents whose own notions of warfare were cruel and savage enough. The world had to travel a long way down its history and to learn much from holy prophets and Christian apostles before milder methods of waging war could begin to prevail.

The great leader, Joshua, was a man of remarkable courage and military capacity. He knew well how to take wise precautions, how to give a needful rest to his hosts when needed, how to follow up a victory to complete it. When he commenced his great work he was advanced in years and had long been subordinate to Moses; he was by no means self-confident and needed much special encouragement on going forth to his task. He was remarkable for faith and obedience to the guidance of God; his "wisdom" in practical leadership was recognised by him as not his own, but as the gift of God, in answer to the prayer of Moses.

Rahab (p. 33 and the special plate facing p. 16). Jericho where she lived was so situated as to be, from a military point of view, the key to at least two important passes which

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led into the heart of Canaan. Its capture was therefore of first-rate importance ; and, as it was strongly fortified, Joshua found it necessary to send out two spies to reconnoitre the city and its surroundings. They enter the house of Rahab, which was on the city wall, hoping to be unobserved. But it is quickly known that two strange men have entered the city, and it is only through the care of Rahab, who hides them in the drying flax upon the roof and then falsely asserts that they have already departed, that they are able to escape by a rope down the city wall. Rahab was a heathen, tainted with heathenish immorality ; she was deceitful and treacherous. But the "light shineth in darkness," and her remarkable *faith* is singled out in the Scripture for especial praise. Somehow, she had become assured that the people of Israel were under the special care of the Almighty, and she put herself upon their side. In St. James ii., where a sharp line is drawn between a faith only talked about and a faith lived out in acts, and where an illustration is drawn from the grace of charity either only talked about or acted out in deeds, Rahab has honourable mention as showing real faith by believing works. Partly because of this faith, and partly because Christ would ally himself with the whole human family, she had the honour of being the ancestress of the Saviour.

Passage of the Jordan (p. 34). This story is full to us of helpful spiritual lessons. Between Israel and the land of Canaan rolls the Jordan river, impassable to Joshua's host ; a few powerful men, as the two spies for instance, might haply swim across. A new start in life ! A strange new journey ! "Ye have not passed this way heretofore." It is a motto for us at the beginning of every new day, for every new duty, for every fresh opportunity of doing good. As the chance of doing some kindness confronts us, it is with the reminder "Ye have not passed this way heretofore." It is a text which will have a strange significance on the day of our death. "You have had many trials, much pain, many dangers, much that flesh and blood shuddered at ; but now lies a path before you that is strange and new—you have not passed this way heretofore." Israel

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were to tread the strange path, but to tread it in the footsteps of a leader. And the leader was the Ark, "the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you." The Ark was the sign of the presence of God, the assurance of the Covenant, of God's promise of mercy. It told of a God who was faithful, who would never leave them nor forsake them. And in our hour of death and danger it is our comfort still: "the Ark of the Covenant passeth over before you." He who was the Sign, the Great Visible Sign, of the mercy and truth of heaven, He who was the perfect Assurance of God's Love, He on Calvary, "the Ark passeth over before you."

On, towards the river, moved the feet of the priests who carried the Sacred Ark; they came nearer and nearer, the river rolled on as before. They were close to the brink; still no change. It was only when the feet of the bearers actually were dipped in the water that the stream rolled aside and the danger was over. It is often so in our journey through life. We approach a difficulty where there seems to be no way out: our road is blocked; life's journey seems hopeless. But to all who go on steadily on the path of duty, just where the road seemingly ends, lo! there is a plain way. When thou fearest, God is nearest. When things come to the worst, they begin to mend. With the temptation, the trial, comes a way to escape. But it is only when we actually touch the hardest point of the trial that the way to escape appears.

"*Captain of the Lord's Host*" (p. 35). Joshua is in sight of the walls of Jericho. He is doubtless planning, as a wise general, how best to assault the city, when he is aware of the presence of a mighty warrior fully armed with a drawn sword in his hand, prepared for battle. "Never on earthly anvil did such rare armour gleam." He is more than any ordinary fighter. On which side will he fight? Joshua anxiously asks the question. It is the "captain of the Lord's host," the Lord of the starry army, the commander of the legions of angels. It is the Knight whose name is "Faithful and True; in righteousness he doth judge and make war." He has come down upon earth to judge and

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war against the foul and brutal Canaanites and to lead the Chosen People to victory. To certain victory, for the armies in Heaven follow Him upon white horses, and out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword that with it he may smite the nations. He, the perfect pattern of the true soldier, terrible to his country's foes, but to weak women and little children gentle with a tenderness all his own. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah and the gentle Lamb of God.

The Fall of Jericho (pp. 35, 36, 37). For six days the Ark, the emblem of the Lord's immediate presence, has been carried round the walls of the besieged city, so strictly beleaguered that none can come out or go in. Picked soldiers marched before it, the priests blowing the sacred trumpets accompanied it, the rest of the host followed it. Save for the trumpets, the march has been accomplished in a mysterious silence. The excitable Israelites have been sternly enjoined to exercise self-control; "ye shall not shout with your voice." On the seventh day the mysterious march round the city is carried out seven times, and then by the general's bidding, at a special signal from the trumpet, the people shouted with a great shout, "and the wall of the city fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him and they took the city." By what means God destroyed the wall is not made known to us; but, as God's works, as we know them, are done by what we call ordinary natural instruments, we may suppose the downfall to have been caused by an earthquake. Or it is possible that some of the inhabitants of Jericho betrayed the city, flung open their gates, and undermined their walls? We may remember that the minds of the men of Jericho would be much impressed by the rumours of Israel's successes and deliverances which had reached the citizens as well as Rahab, that Rahab and her household would be strongly on the side of any who were inclined to surrender, and that the mysterious marching round the city would tell with great force upon the superstitious Canaanitish mind. But what all pious Israelites read in the story was the grand lesson of encouragement to a great faith; "the Lord shall

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fight for you and ye shall stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." And for us to all time the lesson is the same lesson of trust; that no difficulty is so great, so seemingly invincible, but that, at God's bidding, it is simply and easily overcome by the blast of a trumpet or the lifting up of the hand of a little child.

The Sun and Moon stand still at the Word of Joshua (p. 38). The royal city of Gibeon had been taken under the protection of the Israelites and had accordingly been attacked by five kings with their armies. Joshua at once hastens to the rescue. By a rapid night-march, he comes suddenly upon the enemy and gains a great victory. The victory was made more complete by a terrific shower of hailstones which smote the defeated enemy. There was some anxiety among the Israelites lest light should fail them before the work of crushing the enemy was accomplished. In Joshua's faithful heart there was no anxiety. He looked up confidently in prayer and trust to God. "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still and the moon stayed." We are told that this is written in a poetical work called the book of "Jasher." And it is possible that it may be a poetical expression of Israel's faith that on that memorable day the heavens were distinctly on Israel's side, giving the help of the destructive hailstones and giving sufficient light for the completion of the battle work beyond the hopes of the Israelite army—compare "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera." It is a remarkable fact that in the Chinese records it is noted that in the year 1454 B.C., which may easily have been the year of the battle, "in the reign of Yao, the seventh Chinese Emperor, the sun is recorded to have stood still." We may therefore believe that there was some unusual addition to the hours of light which could no doubt have been explained by scientific men as the result of known laws, but which would be naturally described by a Chinaman of 1454 as the "sun standing still." The spiritual teaching of the story is exceedingly helpful, viz., that to a man of faith like Joshua it is clear that God has always time enough to get His work done. "He that believeth shall not make haste." A child of God who

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trusts his Father and whose whole life is only the utterance of that Father's will, knows that there is never any need of anxiety or hurry. The great Will will assuredly be done. The Spirit of Sonship is the Spirit of Power.

The Five Kings (pp. 39 and 40). When the fighting was done, Joshua returned to bring forth the five kings who had hidden themselves in a cave when the battle went against them. The kings are insulted, contemptuously treated, smitten, and hanged. God was doing His work by the instruments which were then to hand. The methods of warfare and conquests of these instruments of God were the rough methods of the time. The siege of Gibeon may have been (like the siege of Lucknow) the occasion of severe and heartbreaking anxiety, and may have seemed in those days to call for terrible reprisals.

Division of the Land (p. 40). At last the conquest of Canaan is practically completed. "The land had rest from war." And the division of the conquered territories is decided by lot. It is one of the striking side lights of the Bible story that all religious people resorted to the trial by lot to decide vexed questions up to the time of the writing of the last verse of the first chapter of Acts. There we read that an Apostle was chosen by casting lots. Directly afterwards we read of the coming of the Holy Spirit, and we never hear of "casting lots" again. The Spirit being a perfect guide, the casting of lots was no longer needed.

Book of Judges. The Book of Judges is in some ways one of the most interesting books in the world. It presents to us a study of many varied characters. It tells the lamentable tale of Israel's repeated disobedience and unfaithfulness and of the chastisements which they most righteously deserved. It tells also of God's most marvellous forbearance towards the rebels and of his forgiveness and unremitting care. It gives us many pictures of ancient manners which are of lasting interest.

The Levite of Ephraim (p. 57). The time of which the Book of Judges tells us was a barbarous time, an unsettled time. There was no ruler in Israel, except such as were

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raised up from time to time for special deliverances, and "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." In no chapters is this made clearer than in the strange and painful story of Judges xvii. and the three following chapters—the story of a time of no safety, no law, no national defence. A part of the story is that of the Levite who married a concubine (or inferior wife). He travelled with her to Gibeah, where an old man hospitably entertained him. Here the men of Gibeah laid violent hands upon his wife and so brutally ill-treated her that she crawled back to the door of the old man's house only to die upon the door step. On this the Levite planned a fearful vengeance. He divided the body into twelve portions and sent them round as a ghastly summons to the tribes of Israel to execute justice upon Benjamin, the tribe to which Gibeah belonged. The work of retribution was so severely carried out that the tribe of Benjamin was all but exterminated. "There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day."

Ehud (p. 41). It was the time of one of the grievous oppressions of Israel, this time by the Moabites in the south-east. Their king, Eglon, had successfully invaded Israel, especially seizing and occupying Jericho, the city of palm trees. Here he ruled oppressively over Israel for eighteen years. A deliverer was raised up in the person of Ehud, a left-handed man. He gained permission to see King Eglon privately on the plea that he had a very solemn message for the king. While professing to deliver the message, with his right hand uplifted in serious exhortation, he secretly drew out his dagger with his left hand and unexpectedly slew the king.

Deborah and Jael (pp. 42, 43). It was the time of the cruel oppression of King Jabin and his captain Sisera, when Israel was terrorised by the tyrant's nine hundred chariots of iron. To an unarmed people, scantily clothed, a heavy iron chariot would be naturally very terrible. It was a time of continual danger; the women who went to draw water at the wells were shot at by archers, travellers dared not venture on the open roads, but lurked about along by-ways. In this crisis, as in the days

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of Joan of Arc in the dire need of France, a woman was raised up to be the means of rescuing the people, Deborah, the prophetess, who declared to the people God's will in matters of judgment and justice. She must have been a fierce woman in a fierce time ; her approval of the treacherous act of Jael whom she pronounces " blessed," proves as much. Very rough instruments are employed by Providence in very rough times. The laws by which the course of the world is worked, have their methods of stern severity. An earthquake of boundless disaster to San Francisco, a volcano which burned up the whole island of Krakatoa, the crushing of a ship by grinding icebergs like a nut under a Nasmyth hammer, the ways of serpents, of sharks, of the fierce animals of wild forests, these have their place in the laws by which God's never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and on earth ; and these are no child's play. Deborah, with her gift of wild stirring eloquence, summoned the tribes " to the help of the Lord ;" she met with varying success ; some of the tribes where the pressure of the tyranny was less, made no response. One town, Meroz, is especially singled out for neglect of patriotic duty and is pronounced accursed. The conflict seemed an unequal one, but an overflow of the Kishon river so greatly hindered the chariot horses that Israel gained a remarkable victory. The general Sisera escaped to the tent of Heber, with whom he had ties of hospitality. He was welcomed by Jael, Heber's wife, and fell asleep in his weariness, confident of security. But she slew him with a heavy tent peg in the night, an act of treachery and breach of the laws of hospitality for which no word of reprobation is too strong. But it is well to remember that we only know part of the story : we do not know the details of the tyranny of Jabin and Sisera ; its brutality and outrage may have been unspeakable. A very fearful retribution suggests as its antecedent a very fearful wrong.

Gideon (p. 44). A valuable man given to Israel at a critical time, a mighty man of valour, but a man of much imperfectness. We first hear of him as longing for his country to be set free from their sufferings under the hand of the Midianites.



SAMUEL. AFTER AN ORIGINAL DRAWING FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY F. HOLLYER, LONDON

Frederick Sandys, Modern British School
1832-1904

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The Lord appears to him when he thinks everything is hopeless, and, in answer to his words of despair, "the Lord looked upon him and said, 'Go in this thy might,' in the might of the look of the face of God." As one of our hymns so helpfully has it :

Hark ! One speaks tenderly low at thy side,

"What ! Tired ? and yet 'tis not eventide.

"Thou hast so little strength, so soon art sad.

"Lift up thine eyes to Mine and be glad."

In the days of Gideon it appears that the people of Israel had gone very far astray from God ; they, in an exceptional manner, did evil in the sight of the Lord. It was a matter of extreme difficulty to win Israel to repentance of their Baal-worshipping ways. And later we find that Gideon himself was taken in the snare of idolatry. Gideon's hesitation when called upon to undertake the work of deliverance from Midian, is overcome (our story tells us) by four helpful signs ; 1, his sacrifice is consumed by heavenly fire ; 2, a fleece of wool becomes wet during the night while the ground remains dry ; 3, a fleece of wool remains dry all night while the ground is wet with dew ; 4, he hears a remarkable dream which strikes terror to the heart of his Midianite enemies.

Gideon, by the summons of a trumpet, gathers around him from the four nearest tribes an army of 32,000 men. But the spirit of military courage and enthusiasm for the war is sadly lacking among them. Gideon therefore makes a proclamation that everyone who is fearful and afraid would do well to go back home again. In answer to this no less than 22,000 leave him, and Gideon is left with but 10,000 men. An oppressed people often lose heart to rise with any earnestness and resolution against their oppressors. The people had also lost the capacity for successful military operations to a great extent ; the alertness, the caution, the willingness to endure hardship rather than allow themselves to be surprised by the enemy, these were lacking in the great majority of the soldiers. The ten thousand were, therefore, tested by Gideon in a curious way. He brought them, after a thirsty march, to a brook of water where leave was given

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them to drink. Of the whole number 300 were cautious warriors, knowing the requirements of military service, the need of watchfulness, the necessity of avoiding greedy self-indulgence which would interfere with their soldierly usefulness; these stooped down only so far as to take up a little water in the hollow of the hand. The rest, forgetting everything in their eager desire to quench their thirst, went down on their hands and knees, and being counted soldiers of an inferior type, were all sent home again. The three hundred, so strangely tested, were all of them good soldiers and watchful men, fitted for the dangerous work in front of them. In the spiritual life something very similar happens: men and women of the highest character are often strangely and hardly tested, it often seems unjustly tested, before being accepted for some especially Christlike work. The victory of Gideon and the three hundred is gained by a night surprise. In three companies, they approach the Midianite camp on three sides, each man armed with a trumpet and an empty pitcher and a light hidden within the pitcher. (It is still an Eastern custom for the watchmen or guardians of a city to patrol the streets with a light hidden in a jar, a species of dark lantern). At a given signal every trumpet was suddenly blown, every pitcher broken and its light revealed, every voice raised the simultaneous cry "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon." And the result was a fatal confusion among the Midianite host, of whom every man's sword was against his fellow.

Jephthah's daughter (pp. 45, 46). Jephthah was a mighty and valiant warrior who was driven out from his home because his mother was of inferior birth. He went away to dwell among heathen people and took into his own life wild heathenish ways. Gradually the force of the man's character gained for him pre-eminence and chieftainship among a band of fierce, lawless men. He became captain of a company of freebooters and murderers, and as such became a name of terror even in the home from which he had been driven. As time went on, there was sore affliction in his old home among the people of the Gileadites. The children of Ammon came up against them

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in war and were too strong for them. The helpless Gileadites bethought them of their strong outcast son. They sent to him to ask him to come and lead them against their victorious foes. He consents on the understanding that they will swear to him before the Lord that he shall be henceforth head and captain over them. From this point the fortune of the war turns. The presence of the one valiant, confident leader puts new heart into the Gileadite forces. Victory is assured to them. From his new home at Mizpeh in Gilead, Jephthah passes over against the children of Ammon. But his past heathenish surroundings betray him into the utterance of a cruel and foolish oath. Among the worshippers of the gods of Syria it was not uncommon (see 2 Kings, iii.) to endeavour to bring success to their enterprises by promising and offering a human sacrifice. Into this folly Jephthah is led. He vowed a vow unto the Lord that if he returned from the war victorious he would offer as a sacrifice the first who met him when he came back home. It were well never to forget the warning, "be not rash with thy mouth and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven and thou on earth; therefore let thy words be few." The Ammonites are subdued; Gilead's victory is complete; twenty cities are taken by their army. Jephthah returns triumphant, to be greeted with a joyous welcome. He now reaps the harvest of his rash folly. His own daughter, his only child, comes out first to meet him with timbrels and dances. Overcome with agony and despair, Jephthah rends his clothes and tells his daughter in bitter grief of the rash oath in which he had "opened his mouth unto the Lord." The heroic girl accepts her fate; her father has vowed; he has gained a great victory; the enemy have had their power broken; she will undergo her sentence. For two months among the lonely places of the mountains she, with her companions, bewails the untimely cutting short of her fair young life. Then dutifully she returns to her father, and "he did with her according to his vow."

Manoah (p. 47). Another time of oppression, this time by new tyrants, the Philistines who were to be hereafter

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for many long years the persistent foes of Israel. The tribe of Dan was the one which was nearest to the Philistine frontier, and it suffered the brunt of the persecution. Manoah was one of the tribe of Dan, living at Zorah. He was a man of a prayerful, reverent, believing spirit. His wife also of a faithful heart, hopeful and trustful. An angel comes to her at the time of her country's dire extremity and announces to her that a deliverer will be given to her people, and that he will be her son. Manoah with his prayerful, obedient turn of mind, is anxious to know how they are to fulfil the responsible task of bringing up aright such a great son. He and his wife are taught by the angel that their son must be specially consecrated to God all his life ; he must never take wine or strong drink, the hair of his head must never be shaven, he must never go near a dead body, he must avoid everything that is unclean. The angel, when Manoah would fain offer hospitality to his heavenly visitor, accepts instead an offering of a kid unto the Lord. And the angel "did wonderfully," ascending up towards heaven in the flame from off the altar.

Samson (pp. 48 to 56). Samson, the man whose work it was to begin to deliver Israel in the days of Philistine tyranny, is a character of unusual interest. A man of strength and a man of many weaknesses, powerful and irresistible in war and yet in many ways the merest child. He had a large fund of boyish humour, a boy's sense of fun, delighting to perplex his guests by a quaint riddle, mocking his enemies who would learn the secret of his strength by inventing falsehoods as to the best way of weakening him, devising, when he was in a revengeful mood, such a mischievous, playful trick as tying together foxes (or jackals) by their tails and sending them forth bearing a lighted firebrand into the Philistines' standing corn. During the early part of his life he appears to have been scrupulously careful in observing his vow of consecration, never allowing his head to be shaven, but wearing his hair in seven plaits, seven the sacred number to remind him of the sacredness of his vow. As consecrated to the work of deliverance, he was endowed with pro-

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digious strength, of which the first instance given is his easy slaughter of a lion with his naked hands. Weak and ill-regulated as he was, he must needs set his heart upon a Philistine wife. And it is thus that he is started upon his task of a lifelong conflict with the Philistines. It is through Philistine women that he is henceforward led into danger and conflict and alas ! sin. Perhaps the Philistines, living by the highway of the sea, descended from the civilized islanders of Cyprus, seemed much more attractive than the homely yeomen farmers of Israel. First, the faithless wife at Timnath, then the abandoned woman of Gaza, and last, Delilah, who betrayed him to mutilation, to prison and to death.

The story of the death of Samson is full of dramatic interest, and it has been much valued by some of the holiest of our Teachers as in many ways a striking type of the death of Christ. Samson blinded, degraded, set to grind at a hand mill in his prison house (such work being considered infamous for a man of warlike character), he is one day led forth by his gaolers to make sport for the Philistine lords. The occasion is one of a festive and sacrificial character, a service of praise to Dagon, the Philistine Fishgod, for giving up to their will their mightiest enemy. The house in which Samson had to make sport was full of men and women. Three thousand people were crowded upon the roof. Samson, who has been growing aware that, as his hair grew, much of his ancient strength is coming back to him, asks the boy who leads him in his blindness to let him rest against two pillars which support the roof. The "House" was no doubt like the buildings of which the ruins are still to be seen at Gaza, built against a stone cliff so that the projecting roof rested upon two great pillars. Samson, grasping each of these pillars and breathing a short, fervent prayer "strengthen me only this once," bowed himself with all his strength and the house fell. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life. And in like manner we believe concerning our Saviour Christ that in a spiritual sense and with reference to the spiritual enemies which are the forces of evil, the dead which He slew in His death were more than they which He slew in His life. On the day of

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His victory upon Mount Calvary He also stretched out His hands and laid hold of Sin and Death, the two great pillars of the House of Evil, and He "bowed Himself," bowed His head and gave up the ghost. "And the house fell." And, instead thereof, "I saw the Holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven."

Ruth (pp. 58 to 62.) *Samuel* (pp. 66, 64). In the story of Ruth and in the first three chapters of the first Book of Samuel, we have a pleasant relief from the grim stories at the end of the Book of Judges. They remind us that even at a time when there was no settled ruler and violent men only too often did that which was right in their own eyes, the God to whom human kindness is dear, had not forgotten to leave room for pious and beautiful lives to be lived. Kindly feelings, devoted affection, generous actions, prayerful piety, grateful acknowledgment of God's goodness, these were still possible. Even in evil times when the bravest despair, "yet have I left me seven thousand in Israel," who have been quite steadfast and true. We have in these stories clearly set forth the high value which the Bible places upon family life, family affection, family ties. The good mother Naomi, the faithful daughter-in-law Ruth, the strong helpful kinsman Boaz, the weeping, prayerful Hannah, the birth of the boys Obed and Samuel (Obed to be the ancestor of David and of the Lord Jesus, Samuel to be the pattern of boyish goodness) . . . what a simple, wholesome picture of family life it all is? We learn, too, how God values country life and country work, and accounts its records worthy to be preserved, that field work need never be connected with coarseness and foulness, that purity and righteous speech and consideration for others are expected by God to be found in the harvest field. In the first Ruth picture we have the departure of Naomi from her home with her husband and two sons. She leaves Bethlehem in a time of scarcity for the land of Moab. She "goes out full," but it is to return "empty." In spite of the time of scarcity she is so rich in the possession of her sons and husband that she considers her life may be well called "Naomi" or pleasant. When she

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comes back a widow and childless, it seems to her that a more fitting name would be "Mara," or bitter. In the second picture we have the "parting of the ways"—Naomi is returning from Moab to Bethlehem; the two young widows of her dead sons accompany her some distance on her way. When the time comes for their return, one, Orpah, says "Good-bye," and goes back home, but the other, Ruth, clave unto her, pleading not to be parted from her in the words which we all love, which have become to some of us a song, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people; and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."

It was "in the beginning of barley harvest" that they came to Bethlehem. The next four pictures set before us Ruth the modest and industrious gleaner, and Boaz the man of wealth, the man who blessed his men in the name of God in his harvest field, courteous, considerate, mindful of the faithful affection which Ruth had shown to her mother Naomi.

In the last five pictures we have Hannah, Eli and Samuel. Hannah, the woman of a sorrowful spirit; she felt unkindness keenly; she suffered much from the taunts of her rival Peninnah; and her remedy was to go up to the house of God to pray and to weep before the Lord. Eli the high priest, a pious man, somewhat weak, who lived in a wicked age, feeling himself unable to cope with its wickedness; a man who did not expect much good from others. He himself lived a quiet, thoughtful life, shrinking much from the ways of men and losing the tactful power of understanding them. Hannah's prayerful, tearful earnestness, seems to him to be only explainable as the result of drunkenness. So little faith and hope had the spectacle of the evil of that age left to him.

And Samuel. He appears to have been the man of the most perfect character, of whom we have a record in the Old Testament, with the possible exception of Joseph. We

Joshua to Job

might be inclined to say that his life was faultless save for the fact that his sons became unjust judges, which would indicate some weakness or laxity on Samuel's part. At all events, his boyhood comes to us in the record as a pattern of faultless boyhood. The son of pious parents, he was dedicated to God even before his birth. His name, Samuel, "heard of God," would remind him that his mother looked upon him as a precious gift granted in answer to prayer. He was early taught by his mother to love God's word and to pray. He grew up, like the Greater Prophet who was to come, in favour with God and man. His mother's song of thanksgiving would be familiar to him in his earliest years, that song which anticipated the song of the Saviour's mother with its especially Christian utterances, "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek"; a truth expressed in one of our Lord's favourite sayings, "the last shall be first and the first last." When twelve years of age, Samuel is called by God to be His special messenger. He is laid down to sleep in the temple of the Lord where his duties lay when the Lord calls him to be the bearer of His terrible message concerning the destruction of Eli's house. It is characteristic of the reverence taught by his early training that when Eli bids him say "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth," he omits the sacred Name, "Speak, for thy servant heareth."

Later in his life, he was to be entrusted with a work of exceptional difficulty in guiding the fortunes of Israel at a time of grave national crisis. His life work met with a large measure of success; not complete success, whose work meets with that? For him in some measure, for the rest of us in large measure,

"Man's work is to labour and leaven
As best he may earth here with heaven.
Let him work on and on as if speeding
Life's work, but not dream of succeeding,
Because if success were intended,
Why, heaven would begin ere earth ended."

J. DOBELL.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA



RAHAB RECEIVETH AND CONCEALETH THE TWO SPIES SENT FROM SHITTIM. (JOSHUA II., 4.) REPRODUCED FROM THE PLATE MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LTD. (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY, 1880)

Frederick Richard Pickersgill, R.A., Modern British School
1820-1900

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA



THE PASSAGE OF THE JORDAN. REPRODUCED FROM THE PLATE
MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS (DALZIEL'S BIBLE
GALLERY, 1880)

F. R. Pickersgill, R.A., Modern British School
1820-1900



THE PASSAGE OF THE JORDAN. FROM AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY
GEORGE WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
died in 1872

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA



JOSHUA AND THE CAPTAIN OF THE LORD'S HOST (CHAPTER V., VERSES 13-14). FROM AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY GEORGE WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
died in 1872



THE FALL OF JERICO. AFTER THE FRESCO IN THE VATICAN, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDERSON, ROME

Planned and supervised by
Raffaello Sanzio (Raphael of Urbino) Roman School
Executed by his Pupils

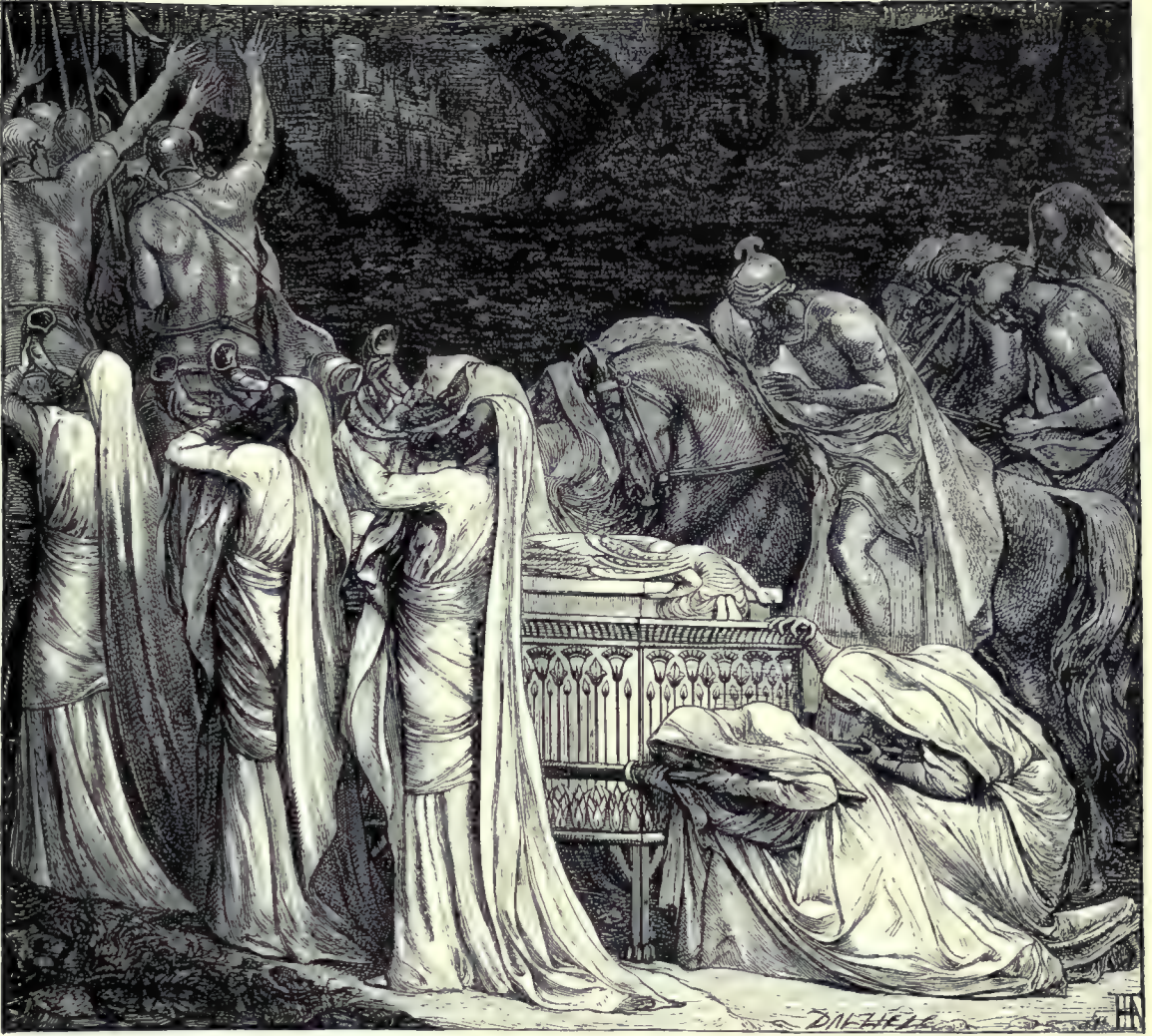
THE BOOK OF JOSHUA



THE WALLS OF JERICO FALL DOWN. "SO THE PEOPLE SHOUTED WHEN THE PRIESTS BLEW WITH THE TRUMPETS: AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN THE PEOPLE HEARD THE SOUND OF THE TRUMPET, AND THE PEOPLE SHOUTED WITH A GREAT SHOUT, THAT THE WALL FELL DOWN FLAT . . ." (JOSHUA VI., 20). FROM AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY GEORGE WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
died in 1872

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA



THE WALLS OF JERICO FALL DOWN. REPRODUCED FROM THE PLATE MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LTD. (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY, 1880)

Henry Hugh Armstead, R.A., Modern British School
1828-1905

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA



THE FIVE KINGS ARE BROUGHT FORTH TO JOSHUA OUT OF THE CAVE. FROM AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
Died in 1872



THE DIVISION OF THE LAND BY LOT, FOR AN INHERITANCE UNTO THE NINE TRIBES, AND THE HALF TRIBE OF MANASSEH. FROM AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
Died in 1872

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



EHUD, THE SON OF GERA, A BENJAMITE, A MAN LEFT-HANDED, DELIVERS THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL FROM EGLON. THE KING OF MOAB (JUDGES III., 15-20). FROM THE PLATE MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LTD. (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY, 1880)

F. Madox Brown, Modern British School
1821-1893

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA



THE SUN AND MOON STAND STILL AT THE WORD OF JOSHUA. (JOSHUA X., 12-13). REPRODUCED FROM THE PLATE MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LTD. (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY. 1880)

Henry Hugh Armstead, R.A., Modern British School
1828-1905

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA



THE FIVE KINGS WHO WAR AGAINST GIBEON HIDE THEMSELVES IN A CAVE AT MAKKEDAH (JOSHUA X., 16).
REPRODUCED FROM THE PLATE MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LTD. (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY, 1880)

E. G. Dalziel, Modern British School
1849-1888

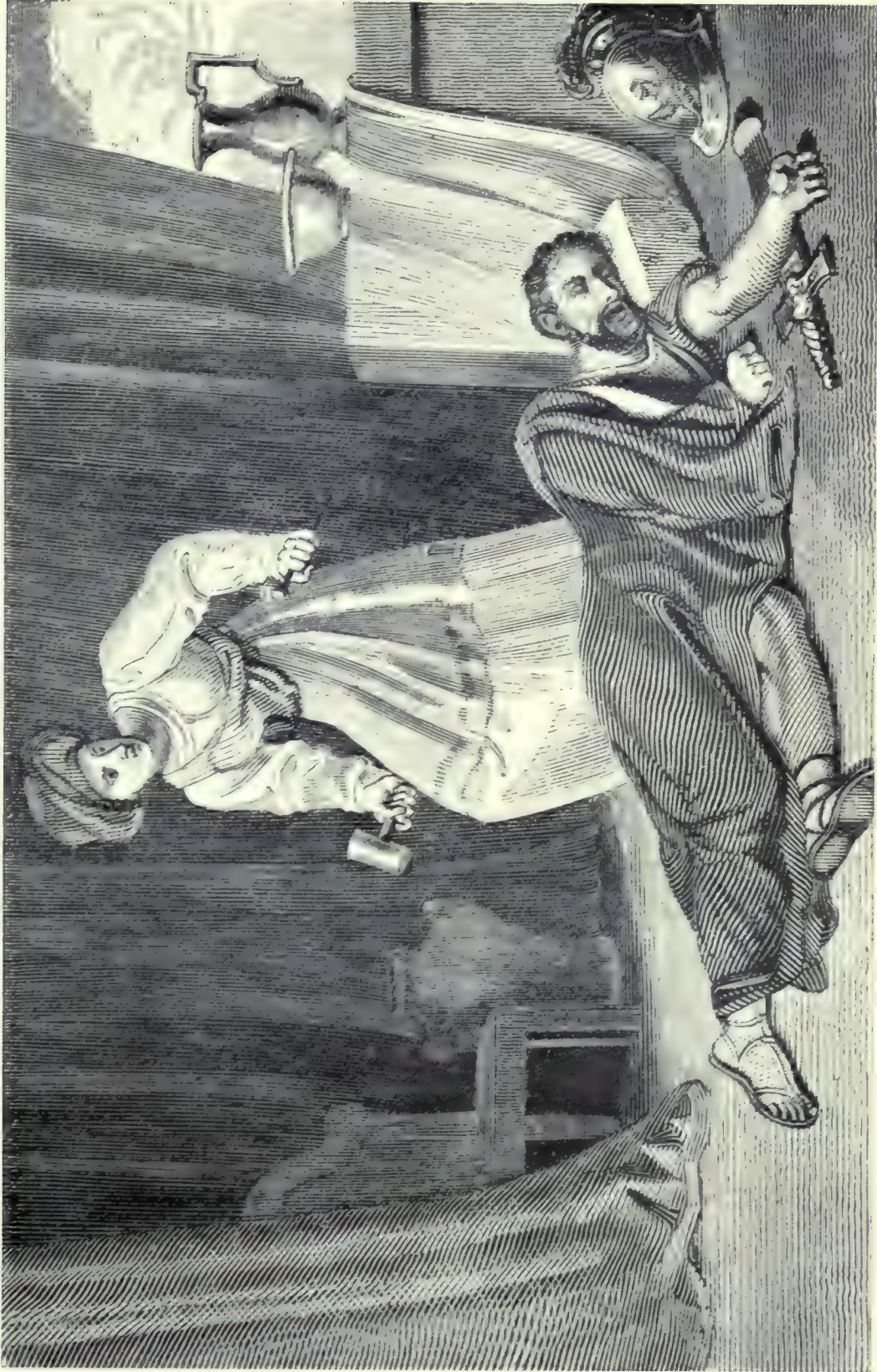
THE BOOK OF JUDGES



DEBORAH, A PROPHETESS, COMMANDS BARAK TO DELIVER THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL FROM JABIN AND SISERA. (JUDGES IV., 6-9)

J. Wylie, Modern British School

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



Jael and Sisera. "Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a nail of the tent, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him." (Judges IV., 21.) From a woodcut by B. P. Anston

Richard Westall, R.A., British School
1765-1836

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



GIDEON'S PRESENT IS CONSUMED WITH FIRE. "THEN THE ANGEL OF THE LORD PUT FORTH THE END OF THE STAFF THAT WAS IN HIS HAND, AND TOUCHED THE FLESH AND THE UNLEAVENED CAKES; AND THERE ROSE UP FIRE OUT OF THE ROCK, AND CONSUMED THE FLESH AND THE UNLEAVENED CAKES." (JUDGES VI., 21.) FROM A WOODCUT PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
Died in 1872



GIDEON AND THE MIRACLE OF THE FLEECE OF WOOL. "AND IT WAS SO: FOR HE ROSE UP EARLY ON THE MORROW, AND THRUST THE FLEECE TOGETHER, AND WRINGED THE DEW OUT OF THE FLEECE, A BOWL FULL OF WATER." (JUDGES VI., 38)

J. Goeree, Dutch School
17th Century

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



JEPHTHAH. (JUDGES xi. 35-36)

BY KIND PERMISSION OF LORD ARMSTRONG

Sir J. E. Millais, Bart. P.R.A.
1829-1896



THE BOOK OF JUDGES



THE DEATH OF ABIMELECH (JUDGES IX., 52-53). FROM AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT
PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
Died in 1872



JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER—THE SACRIFICE. FROM THE ORIGINAL PICTURE
AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY G. BROGI

Charles Le Brun, French School
1619-1690



JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER: THE DAYS OF MOURNING. "AND HE SAID, GO, AND HE SENT HER AWAY FOR TWO MONTHS: AND SHE WENT WITH HER COMPANIONS, AND BEWAILED HER VIRGINITY UPON THE MOUNTAINS." JUDGES XL. 30

Henry O'Neil, A.R.A., British School
1817-1880

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



MANOAH'S SACRIFICE. "FOR IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN THE FLAME WENT UP TOWARD HEAVEN FROM OFF THE ALTAR, THAT THE ANGEL OF THE LORD ASCENDED IN THE FLAME OF THE ALTAR . . ." (JUDGES XIII., 20). AFTER THE PAINTING IN THE DRESDEN GALLERY, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY HANFSTAENGL, LONDON

Rembrandt, Dutch School
1606-1669

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



SAMSON SLAYS THE YOUNG LION. (JUDGES XIV., 5-6.) REPRODUCED FROM THE PLATE MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LTD. (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY, 1880)

Lord Leighton, P.R.A., Modern British School
1830-1896

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



THE YOUTH OF SAMSON. JUDGES XIV. 6.

THE PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO

Léon Bonnat, Modern French School



SAMSON'S MARRIAGE FEAST. "SO HIS FATHER WENT DOWN UNTO THE WOMAN: AND SAMSON MADE THERE A FEAST; FOR SO USED THE YOUNG MEN TO DO." (JUDGES XIV., 10.) AFTER THE PAINTING IN THE DRESDEN GALLERY, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ HANFSTAENGL.

Rembrandt, Dutch School
1606-1669

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



SAMSON MENACING HIS FATHER-IN-LAW. (JUDGES XIV., 19.)
BERLIN GALLERY. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY HANFSTAENGL

Rembrandt, Dutch School
1606-1669



SAMSON SLAYS THE PHILISTINES. (JUDGES XV., 16.) FROM AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT
PUBLISHED IN 1866 BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnor, German School
Died in 1872

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



SAMSON. AFTER THE ORIGINAL PAINTING FROM A
PHOTOGRAPH BY F. HOLLYER, LONDON

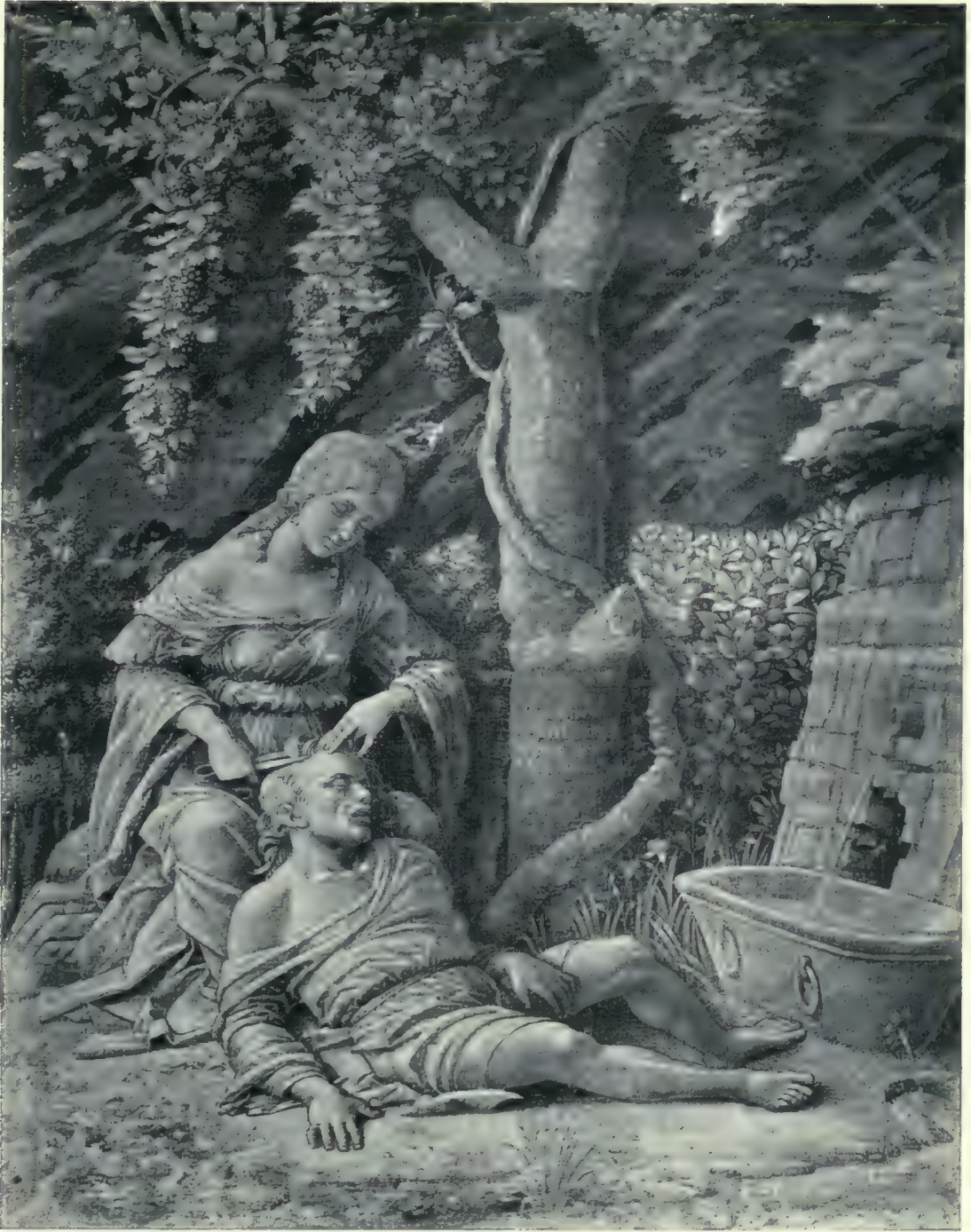
G. F. Watts, O.M., R.A., Modern British School
1817-1904



SAMSON AT GAZA ESCAPES, AND CARRIES AWAY THE GATES OF THE CITY. JUDGES XVI. 3. REPRODUCED FROM THE PLATE MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY, 1889)

Lord Leighton, P.R.A., Modern British School
1830-1896

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



SAMSON AND DELILAH. AFTER THE ORIGINAL PAINTING IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ HANFSTAENGL

Andrea Mantegna, School of Padua
1431-1506

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



SAMSON TAKEN BY THE PHILISTINES. (JUDGES XVI., 21.) AFTER THE PAINTING AT MUNICH FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ HANFSTAENGL

Peter Paul Rubens, Flemish School
1577-1640

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



SAMSON. (JUDGES XVI., 21.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL PAINTING IN THE WALKER GALLERY, REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE LIVERPOOL CORPORATION

Solomon J. Solomon, R.A., Modern British School

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

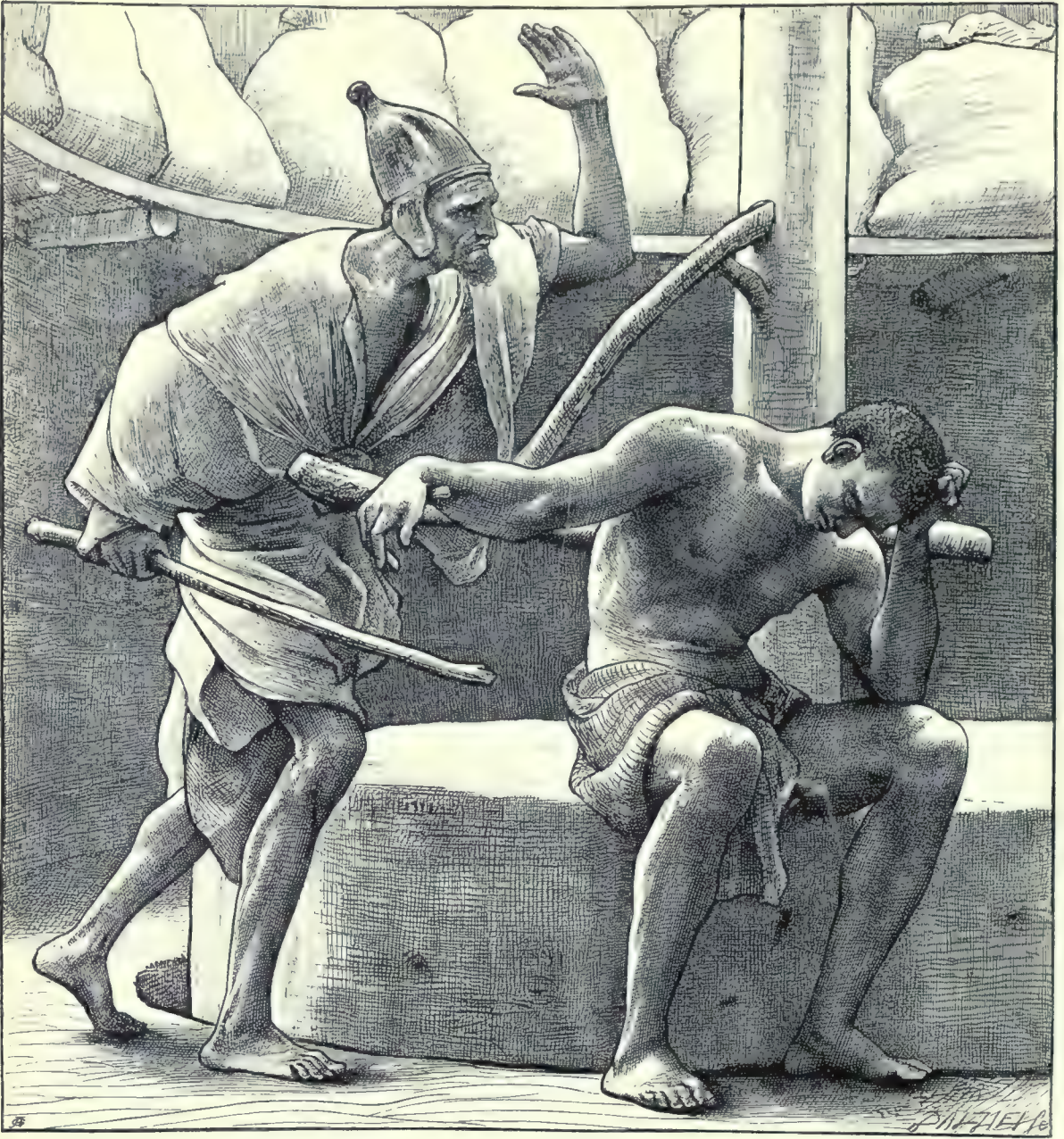


THE PHILISTINES PUT OUT THE EYES OF SAMSON. AFTER THE COPY IN THE CASSEL GALLERY, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ HANFSTAENGL, LONDON

Rembrandt, Dutch School

1606-1669

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



SAMSON AT THE MILL. "AND HE DID GRIND IN THE PRISON HOUSE." (JUDGES XVI., 21.) REPRODUCED FROM THE PLATE
MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY, 1880)

Lord Leighton, P.R.A., Modern British School
1830-1896

THE BOOK OF JUDGES



THE LEVITE OF EPHRAIM. (JUDGES XIX., VERSES 26-27.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL PICTURE IN THE LOUVRE, PARIS, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO.

Louis Charles Auguste Couder, French School
1790-1873



ELIMELECH AND NAOMI, WITH THEIR TWO SONS, ARE DRIVEN BY FAMINE INTO MOAB, FROM A COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., PARIS

Alexandre Bida, Modern French School
1808-1895

THE BOOK OF RUTH



RUTH AND NAOMI. "AND RUTH SAID, INTREAT ME NOT TO LEAVE THEE, OR TO RETURN FROM FOLLOWING AFTER THEE: FOR WHITHER THOU GOEST, I WILL GO; AND WHERE THOU LODGEST, I WILL LODGE: THY PEOPLE SHALL BE MY PEOPLE, AND THY GOD MY GOD." (RUTH 1. 16.) AFTER THE PICTURE IN THE WALKER ART GALLERY, LIVERPOOL. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE LIVERPOOL CORPORATION

Philip H. Calderon, R.A., Modern British School
1833-1898



RUTH AND BOAZ. "THEN SAID BOAZ UNTO RUTH, HEAREST THOU NOT, MY DAUGHTER? GO NOT TO GLEAN IN ANOTHER FIELD, NEITHER GO FROM HENCE, BUT ABIDE HERE, FAST BY MY MAIDENS." (RUTH II. 8.) AFTER THE PICTURE IN THE LOUVRE, PARIS. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLEMENT & CO.

Nicolas Poussin, French School
1594-1665

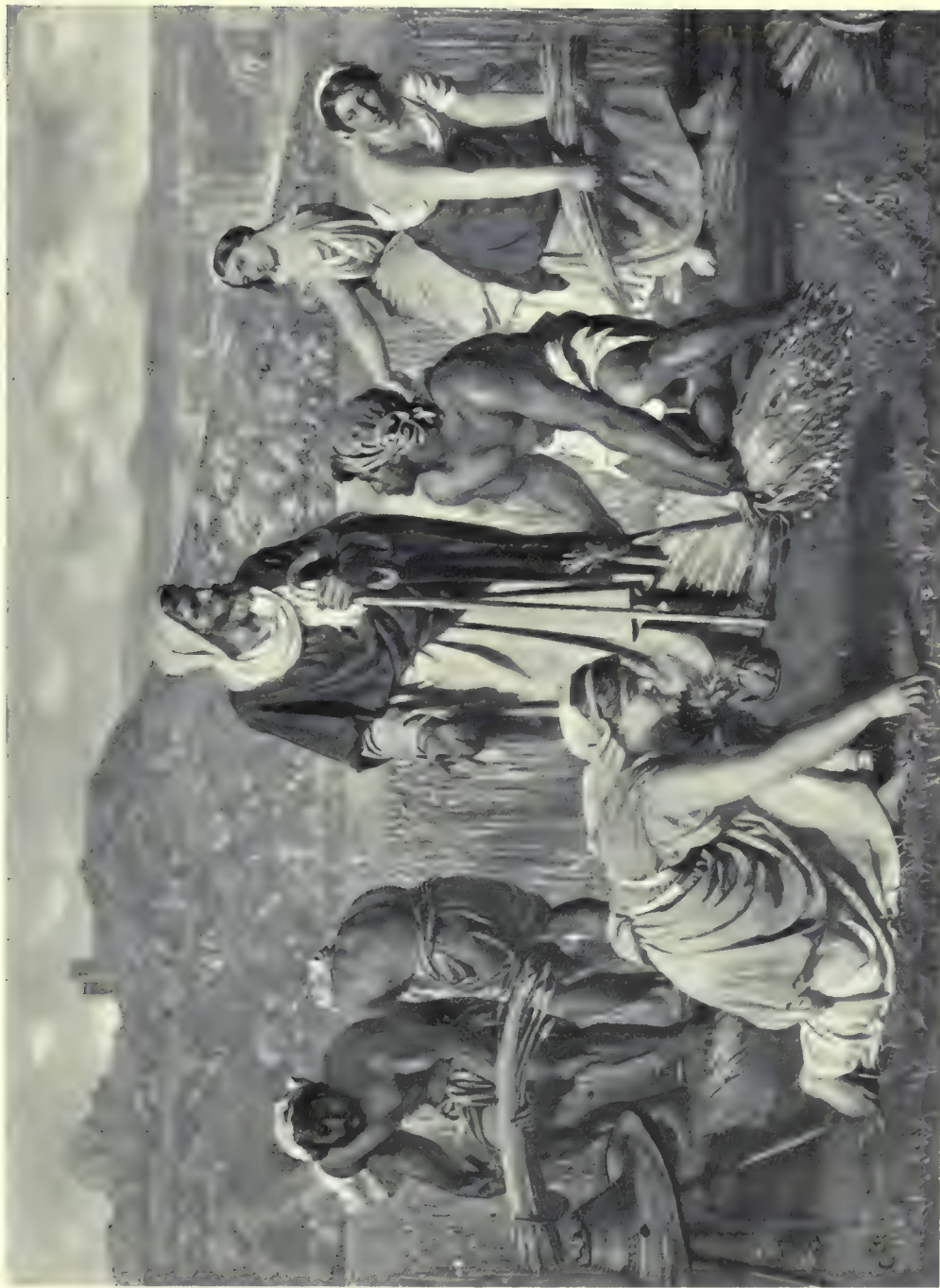
THE BOOK OF RUTH



RUTH GLEANING IN THE FIELD OF BOAZ. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., PARIS

Louis Bruck-Lajos, Modern Hungarian School

THE BOOK OF RUTH



RUTH GLEANING IN THE FIELD OF BOAZ. AFTER THE ORIGINAL PAINTING FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., PARIS

Charles Gleyre, French School
1807-1874

THE BOOK OF RUTH



RUTH BY PERMISSION OF THE BERLIN PHOTOGRAPHIC CO., NEWBOND
ST LONDON

Henry Ryland, R.I., Modern British School

THE BOOK OF RUTH



RUTH, NAOMI AND THE CHILD OREH. (RUTH IV. 16.) FROM THE PLATE MADE BY ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LTD. (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY. 1880)

Simeon Solomon, Modern British School
Died 1905

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL



HANNAH TEACHING SAMUEL TO READ. AFTER THE PAINTING IN THE HERMITAGE GALLERY AT ST. PETERSBURG, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ HANFSTAENGL, LONDON

Rembrandt, Dutch School
1606-1669

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL



HANNAH, ELI AND THE INFANT SAMUEL. "FOR THIS CHILD I PRAYED; AND THE LORD HATH GIVEN ME MY PETITION WHICH I ASKED OF HIM: THEREFORE ALSO I HAVE LENT HIM TO THE LORD; AS LONG AS HE LIVETH HE SHALL BE LENT TO THE LORD." (I. SAMUEL, CH. I., V.V. 27-28)

F. W. W. Topham, R.I., Modern British School.

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL



THE INFANT SAMUEL KNEELING AT PRAYER. AFTER THE PAINTING IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ HANFSTAENGL

Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A., British School
1723-1792

From Saul to Nehemiah

By the Rev. R. C. Gillie, M.A.



VEN to a partial observer, if his view be external, the record of the Hebrew kings is a grim one. Saul was a suicide, David an adulterer, Solomon in his old age an idolator and a tyrant. When Rehoboam by his crass folly split the nation into two fragments the darkness deepened yet further. Of the nineteen kings of the Northern Kingdom nine died by violence and within a period of some 250 years the line of succession was changed by conspiracy no fewer than eight times. In the Kingdom of Judah the dynasty of the sons of David remained unchanged, but the evil story of needless bloodshed and sordid tragedy is only occasionally relieved by some instance of national well-doing and true kingliness. The history of the four centuries from Saul to Jehoiakim, stained with intrigue and folly, ferocity and greed, brings to our minds the dire records of the Italian republics and principalities of the Renaissance period. In both cases the history is equally revolting. But just as there developed beneath and amidst the tumult and cruelty of mediæval Italy an extraordinary sensitiveness to the beautiful and a creative artistic genius of undying value, so also behind the violence and foulness of these centuries in Israel we can trace mysterious movements of world-wide significance. Out of the recurring conflict and occasional cohesion of twelve rude tribes there sprang a nation more vital than any other. Was there ever a more marvellous tale of national persistence? After untold calamities still this nation abides, still it increases in wealth, in vigour, and in national spirit. We have here a phenomenon unparalleled in history. For its explanation we must go back to these very chronicles which are blackened with the murders and immoralities of the Hebrew Kings.

The secret of the making of this nation is found in

Joshua to Job

its belief in Jehovah. Deep down beneath the passions and the conflicts burns the fire which is to mould the people and give indomitable vitality to the nation—the Jewish thought of God. In these years when almost brutish rusticity was followed so swiftly by an unwholesome and too highly developed civilization, both alike obscuring and oppressing the moral sense of the people, the prophets of Jehovah assiduously cherished the flickering flame of religious belief which had been handed down from their forefathers. They did more. They caused the light to burn with so fierce a brightness that almost against its will the nation was convinced of the unity, the aloneness and the righteousness of God. Hedged about by licentious religions and hindered by repeated national lapses into congenial idolatries, those noble precursors of John the Baptist struggled on until the triumph of the great truth entrusted to them was assured. When the Jews returned, a mere remnant, from their long exile they had become forever inviolate against the seductions of idolatry, and they had been finally convinced that Jehovah and righteousness were one. In captivity and deprivation the soul of the nation was welded indissolubly to its great faith.

It is this inward significance of a blood-stained and barbaric time which sets the artist so severe a task—that is, if we are to look upon him as in any sense an interpreter of the spirit of the record. He fails unless he reveals the ever-deepening stream of national consciousness and ethicized religion amid the stagnant pools and ill-smelling bog-holes of the river-bed which is the common life of the people. Unless we can catch a glimpse of the soul of David, both in his wild freebooting days and in the evil luxury of his decay, unless we receive at least a hint that Elijah is something more than a fierce opponent of a neighbouring idolatrous nation, the picture is less to us than the printed page and, indeed, may contribute only to its obscuration.

Some artists have contented themselves with depicting merely the external circumstances of each incident. They give a careful and, as far as could be ascertained, accurate representation of the dress, the scenery and the characteristics of the

From Saul to Nehemiah

period. Julius Schnorr is an example of this class. His illustrations are instructive and informative rather than illuminating. Other painters frankly neglect exact delineation of external circumstances and seek to represent the spirit of the event, the soul of the chief actor. Sir Edward Burne-Jones' remarkably beautiful picture of Solomon receiving from his father instructions for the building of the temple (p. 96) is a conspicuous instance of such work. We may take it as certain that David's soldiers did not carry banners with a strange device and the character of the throne is obviously as much mediæval as oriental, but the solemn pageantry, the contrast of the war-worn king and the untried boy, the awestruck attention of the court—all combine to convey to the mind certain vivid impressions. We are made to see in the building of the temple the passing on of a vital thought, a fresh starting point in the history of religion, a monument of dear memories and long-cherished hopes. Other artists travel still further along the same line and set themselves to depict the pure ideal, not the fact but the intention, not the blurred actuality but the vision and the dream, the innermost reality, the determining factor of life. Domenico Zampieri (p. 88), and in a higher degree D. G. Rossetti, both paint David as king (p. 88), not as he was, but as he strove to be in his best moments. Their pictures are symbols rather than representations. Yet in Rossetti's picture (p. 88), in the strong hand as fit to grasp a sword as tune a harp, in the sensuous, brooding face revealing a nature singularly open to temptation and to ecstasy, we are made aware of the real David, so noble and so brutal, whose moods of generosity and vengefulness alternately delight and appal us, whose repentance is as wholehearted as his sin, both alike removed from the experience of smaller, meaner men.

Only a few artists, and these the very greatest, succeed in carrying conviction as regards both form and spirit. There are few figures in Michelangelo's "Slaying of Goliath" (p. 84), and the composition is of a splendid simplicity. Yet with what insight and with what significance he uses the materials he has retained. The tent reminds us that this combat was fought

Joshua to Job

under the very eyes and almost within touch of the confronting armies. The grimly watchful soldiers to right and left, just emerging from the shadow, proclaim how much hangs upon this single-handed conflict. The figure of David, in its exquisitely poised vigour and almost angelic nobility, contrasted with the huge bulk of the fallen giant, reveals much more than the triumphant deed of a young Bethlehemite. It proclaims the victory of spirit over matter, of faith over brute force.

It is one merit of this collection of pictures that these various types of the painter's power are adequately represented and cast diverse lights upon the shadowed story of a struggling nation, insignificant in numbers and trivial in outward achievement, yet destined by its thoughts, by its saints and heroes, and by Him who was Hero among saints and Saint among heroes, to dominate the world.

II.

The history of the Hebrew Kings falls naturally into two portions—the period of the undivided kingdom under Saul, David, Solomon and Rehoboam, and the period after the disruption when Israel and Judah were at variance.

No circumstance does more to excite our interest in the first three kings of the Jews than the extraordinary contrast presented by the nation at the accession of Saul and during the reign of Solomon. In little more than fifty years the country had passed from a state little removed from barbarism to a highly developed civilization. The fellow-tribesmen of Saul were simple agriculturists; they were ignorant alike of architecture and navigation; not a chariot, scarcely a horse was to be seen in their cities; at one period Saul and Jonathan alone among the fighting men possessed armour; their first king was taken from the plough tail and after his accession returned to his farm. Under Solomon we find an elaborate governmental organization, magnificent buildings, fleets which sailed the Mediterranean on the west and to Arabia or India on the east; an enormous development of commerce; and a standing army which included thousands of cavalry and a thousand chariots. It has been suggested that

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL



DAVID. THE KING IS PORTRAYED STANDING ON MOUNT MORIAH AND LEANING ON THE PREPARED CORNER STONE OF THE TEMPLE. HE BEHOLDS IN VISION THE CROWN-SURMOUNTED CROSS, THAT SYMBOLIZES THE SUFFERINGS OF THE SON OF DAVID, AND THE GLORY TO COME, AFTER THE ORIGINAL PAINTING IN THE CHAPEL OF THE ASCENSION, BAYSWATER ROAD, LONDON

F. Shields, Modern British School

From Saul to Nehemiah

a parallel can be adduced in the social change in England as we pass from the reign of Henry II. to "the spacious times of great Elizabeth," but in this case there was a lapse of three centuries. The nearest parallel is to be found in the transformation of Japan within living memory by a swift passage from an antiquated feudal system to a highly wrought civilization as advanced as that of any land.

Civilization was no unmixed blessing to the Hebrews. Solomon accomplished his vast schemes only by means of forced labour and exhausting taxation. His luxury, polygamy, and elaborate idolatry showed how unwholesome much of this too rapid development had been. The splendour of his kingdom was to a large extent evanescent and ill-based. But the imagination cannot fail to be stirred by the sudden unfolding of his gorgeous kingdom from the dull and unpromising larva form presented by untutored Israel, when Saul was seriously concerned at the loss of his father's asses and David was sent to shepherd his father's sheep. As the chronicler proudly relates, "The King made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees in the lowland for abundance." What manner of men were these who thus transformed Israel?

Saul was acclaimed king largely on account of his size and strength. "Higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward" is the rudely picturesque phrase of the writer. But it was not thews and sinews alone which gave him prominence. His mind was open to the unseen to a curious, and not wholly healthy, degree. There was a certain lack of balance in his nature which operated both for good and for evil. After being privately anointed as king he happened to meet a company of wandering prophets in their hour of ecstasy. Immediately he too fell under the influence of their excitement and prophesied along with them. The exaltation of his spirit made him sensitive to the nearest religious influence. Again, when news came to him of the imminent destruction of Jabesh-Gilead at the hands of the Ammonites, a Berserker-like fury fell upon him and hacking his oxen into fragments he sends this

Joshua to Job

bloody token of war to all the tribes, calling them with such effect to his standard that the beleaguered city was immediately relieved and the enemy triumphantly driven back. But this same openness to impulse was at times merely disastrous. It set him at critical moments in opposition to the venerable Samuel, who had for so long been the mouthpiece of God to Israel and in a peculiar degree to him, the king. As disasters gathered round him, both courage and self-control waned. Whether we explain his fits of gloom and jealousy, naïvely described by the narrator as "an evil spirit from the Lord," as the shadow of insanity or solely as the torments of conscience, it is only too evident that his soul is clouded with the sense of alienation from Jehovah.

Sadly we watch the gigantic figure, with a mind scarcely more mature than a child's, go stumbling down the valley of shadows to the final tragedy. Only safe in dependence upon a higher wisdom he had striven to take his fate into his own hands; and then, seeing himself hemmed in by inevitable disaster, he passed through the "open door" by which cowardice has lured many in like bitterness who had once heard as high a call.

Two scenes of his darker days have always attracted the artistic imagination. The first is the hour in which David, "the sweet psalmist of Israel," has been brought into his presence in the hope that music may lift the cloud of depression. It is this incident which E. Normand has depicted (p. 82), and while there is no great insight in his rendering there is a good deal that is suggestive in the pose of the figures. We can imagine a David supple, strenuous, unafraid before wild beasts or monstrous men, swept by a storm of pity, until he is tense as a string of his own harp when he kneels to meet the haunted gaze of the haggard king. Robert Browning in his poem "Saul," with the deeper penetration of the true lover of the psychological moment, has explored the farthest bounds of thought and emotion possible in the intercourse of the king and his gleeman who was so soon to be his successor. It is when we read the dirge David wailed over Saul and Jonathan, as they lay dishonoured upon the dark hills of Gilboa, that we realize how intimate the early intercourse

From Saul to Nehemiah

must have been in those days when the young shepherd strove to banish the dread shapes that beat their bat-like wings about the throne.

The other scene is the visit of Saul to the witch of Endor. Salvator Rosa's sombre genius instinctively chose this incident for his brush (p. 86), but by such accessories as the grinning skeleton, the tripod and the steaming vapour he has added a touch of melodrama wholly absent from the Scripture account. There, every detail is subordinated to one impression, solemn rather than weird. We are not so much impressed by the fact that Samuel has returned from among the dead to the terror of beholders, but rather that Saul at least is so burdened by despair that he feels no terror and can only utter his heart-broken cry: "I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me and answereth me no more." It is the desperate appeal of a child, groping in the dark. The response of Samuel falls like a knell upon our ears, and yet it opens rather than closes a dim door of hope; "To-morrow shall thou and thy sons be *with me*."

Jonathan was the visible link between Saul and David, but he has quite distinctive individuality of his own. His memory brings with it a certain breath of pathos, for like our own Black Prince and like the second Kaiser of Germany, he was of gallant bearing and by an untimely end missed the full enjoyment of the high inheritance for which he seemed destined—yet he fills a notable place; for, while he has never been a popular hero, he has come down to us as a type—the type of the perfectly loyal friend. Heroic, magnanimous, patient, loyal to his father and loyal to the friend whom his father counted a foe, Jonathan might appear to have lived in vain were it not for the splendid and unfaltering affection he bore for David. "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." No nobler expression for the noblest friendship can be found.

David was for long viewed as an ancient saint whose holiness was stained by only one dark deed. Almost the whole

Joshua to Job

of the Psalter was attributed to him, and he was credited with a prophetic insight which placed him alongside of the writer of the poignant lines, "He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." As historical study became a science a strong revulsion from such a view was inevitable. To-day there is a tendency to represent him as a successful marauder and a barbaric king who, beyond his skill in music, bore no more likeness to the David enshrined in the Church's imagination than is to be descried between the undisciplined tribal prince who fought petty wars in the passes of Snowdon and the King Arthur of Tennyson's poems. But this is too simple an explanation of an obviously complex question. The truth lies somewhere between the two extremes. David was a fierce freebooter, not infrequently unscrupulous in warfare and in revenge ; but he was also much more. The Higher Criticism in its strongest attack will not succeed in shaking the conviction that the lament over Saul and Jonathan was written by a true poet of exquisite sensibility, and further, that it was not the purely imaginative work of some unknown hand, but a cry from the very soul of the stricken David.

Again, the seducer of Bathsheba was no doubt lustful and a traitor, but repentance as deep and as conclusive as his was impossible in a soul untouched by the finer influences of the spiritual life or closed against the awakening voice of the God he dimly knew. When we consider his undoubted poetic gift and his fluctuating, but sincere, desire for Divine fellowship, the mere fact that all the Psalms were attributed to him will be sufficient to prove to us that some, like the 23rd, were really first sung by him, and that he was not wholly unworthy to be linked for ever with One whose life was a transfiguration of all that is best in our poor lives and who yet bore willingly the title of "the Son of David."

It was David who made his nation truly one and who centralized and gave splendour to its religious faith. He it was who laid the foundation of all that was noble and magnificent in Solomon's achievements, and who passed on his conceptions of a fitting and permanent temple to replace the poor tent where

From Saul to Nehemiah

the Divine presence had so long been sought. Yet more wonderful, songs which he sang in that twilight day, when so much was unrevealed, still hold their place in the golden light of completed revelation.

Only once or twice, as in the picture by D. G. Rossetti already alluded to, has a painter succeeded in indicating the complexity of nature which was at once David's richest endowment and his most insistent temptation. In the admirably composed sketch by Alfred Rethel of the anointing by Samuel (p. 81), in the lithe young figure, every muscle firm, we see all the tokens of the physical prowess for which David was famous, and can well imagine such a one writing: "He hath made my feet like hinds' feet." When we turn to the wonderful Rembrandt of the reconciliation of David with Absalom (p. 91), we wonder at first glance whether the painter has had any other end in view than a masterly portrait of some characteristic head that has caught his fancy and a magical working out of chiaroscuro. But further acquaintance brings hesitation. Here is David the man of strong passions and the successful ruler, not unkingly, yet bloated and coarsened with self-indulgence. Perhaps so far Rembrandt had entered into the story. But we find no sign or token of the simple passionate affection which broke out in the cry: "O, Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would God I had died for thee, O Absalom my son." If we turn to Mr. Shields' picture to redress the balance and to be reminded of the spiritual side, we again see only one aspect. This rapt, upturned face, this scholarly figure, refined to weakness, has no relation to the outlaw who fought his way to the throne. Here is the poet, the man of letters, the courtier—not the originator, but the student of other men's ideas.

It is impossible to decipher clearly the inner character of Solomon. From the point of view of romance he is a much less striking figure than David, and from the point of view of religion vastly more disappointing. The charm of adventure is wholly absent from his story. His position was assured from the moment of his accession, conspiracy and revolt alike conspicuously

Joshua to Job

failed. The most stirring events in his reign were the opening ceremonies of some costly building or the visits of some potentate. Considerations of policy seem to have influenced even the alliances which filled his harem with foreign women. His very sins are sins of cold thought, the result of slowly matured deliberation. Gorgeousness is the outstanding quality which marks his reign as we behold it through the mist of centuries.

The Solomonic period was indeed an age of gold. Centuries later the tradition of it drew forth a comment from our Lord upon the gay Palestinian flowers, "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

The focus of interest has changed since the days of this historian, and we pass swiftly over the laboriously compiled accounts of wealth and success to enquire concerning the wisdom of Solomon. If he really possessed it, why did he not apply it to the guidance of his own life? This is the question which gives tragic colour to his story.

Most of us are convinced that the Book of Proverbs is not, as once supposed, almost entirely Solomonic, but it is an unsupported deduction which suggests that scarcely any of the Proverbs were by him. The persistence of the Jewish tradition through so many centuries is too remarkable not to have had some valid source. And when one brings to mind his own personal failure in morality this persistence becomes the more conspicuous. There is not more than a little pardonable exaggeration in the statement in alluring phrase; "And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt . . . and he spake three thousand proverbs . . . and he spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts and fowl and of creeping things and of fishes."

One incident sets his reputation for wisdom in high relief. It is the well-known case of judgment between the claimants for the living child. His verdict is not consistent with modern ideas of strict justice. It was a judgment by intuition, not by evidence, but none the less it commends itself

From Saul to Nehemiah

to us by its insight into human nature, its promptitude and its inevitable equity. This dramatic scene has been chosen by many painters. It is interesting to compare the different treatment by Bonifazio Veronese and Raphael (p. 97). Bonifazio Veronese has given us the more complete and graceful picture—no doubt glowing with the wonderful golden light for which he is famous could we see the original—but he fails to mark any contrast between the two suppliants. Raphael's portraiture of the youthful Solomon is strangely lacking in veracity and charm, but the characterization of the two women is admirable, and though, with a simplicity that is really great, there are only four figures, the picture is charged with the feeling of the critical moment. William Dyce conveys the story emphatically and well, but, as so often with the modern artist, his picture suffers from over-accentuation and lack of restraint.

With the candour so characteristic of the Scriptures the historian not only admits but roundly declares the declension and degradation of the latter years of Solomon's reign. He leaves us to reconcile for ourselves the Divine promise of a special endowment of wisdom and all the earlier proofs of its fulfilment with the conspicuous folly and apostacy of the closing scenes. In more than one way Solomon showed an amazing lack of moral perception and religious stability. By the never-ending accessions to his harem from neighbouring peoples he surrounded himself with idolatrous women, who demanded, not merely toleration, but state recognition for their various religions. It was an easy step further for Solomon to participate personally in the heathen ceremonial.

If it was David who gave Israel unity and laid the foundations of Solomon's prosperity, then it was Solomon who began the cleavage of the people and prepared the way for Rehoboam's calamities. If Saul was haunted at intervals by an evil spirit, then most surely had Solomon embraced the demon whose work it is to show "*corruptio optimi pessima*."

It is not for us to pronounce the final condemnation of Solomon. A great artist, whose picture unhappily could

Joshua to Job

scarcely be included in this collection, has depicted him in the day of judgment standing hesitant and uneasy, not knowing whether to turn to the right or to the left. His significance among the tragical careers of history is clear. Not the gift of wisdom itself can remain permanent and uncorrupted unless it is treasured and watched. No advantageous circumstances at the opening of life, however incomparable the moral vision and the material endowments, can secure the career which shines more and more clearly unto the perfect day, unless temptation be strenuously grappled and the pain of restraint be accepted. Is it not written of a greater than Solomon? "He was made perfect by suffering," suffering through temptation.

The seed that had been sown came quickly to harvest after Solomon's death. Rehoboam, the pale shadow of his father's greatness, resembling him only in despotic temper, had his one opportunity of conciliating the people and cast it lightly and vain-gloriously aside. The reader is filled with amazement, not that he rent Israel in two, but that he retained Judah's fidelity to the end. How devious and hopeless the path of the chosen people! how brief the period of triumph and splendour! and it must be added, how mysteriously wonderful the Unseen Power whose purposes were carried so unfailingly to an issue with tools so swiftly blunted and broken in His hands!

III.

Immediately upon the disruption of the kingdom the channel of interest is changed from the Kings to the Prophets of Israel. Both in personality and in achievement Elijah and his foremost successors were far greater than the contemporary rulers of their race. David and Solomon had been moved by dreams of the nation's future to which even the latter had held with tenacity in the first half of his reign; their successors returned to the more or less barbarous ideals of the kings of petty tribes; they borrowed the religious beliefs of their neighbours and lost spirituality of conception to so grave an extent that all knowledge of the great God of Israel seemed in danger of fading away. At this juncture dawns the great day of the prophets. From this

THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS xix. 4-5.



ELIJAH IN THE WILDERNESS. FROM THE ORIGINAL PICTURE IN THE WALKER GALLERY, LIVERPOOL
BY PERMISSION OF THE LIVERPOOL CORPORATION

Lord Leighton, P.R.A., Modern British School
1830-1896

From Saul to Nehemiah

moment it would seem to be more fitting to speak of the " prophets and kings " of Israel than of the " kings and prophets." A judgment which painters have instinctively confirmed in deriving their subjects almost exclusively from the lives of Elijah and Elisha.

Strictly speaking, Moses was the first prophet of Israel, but it is not until the time of Samuel that we find companies of prophets an abiding feature of the national life.

In David's reign both Gad the seer and Nathan the prophet rise into considerable prominence, and their reputation with the King was a presage of the days of the great statesman-prophets like Isaiah, who whilst immersed in the politics of his day revealed with absolute clearness their spiritual import. But while Elijah had forerunners of distinction he held a place peculiarly his own. His career marks a new era in the story of the prophetic order. Even as to character he is the acknowledged prototype of a long line of reformers of whom, perhaps, the nearest to our own day are Savonarola and John Knox. Like all such, he appears to have been created for the desperate need of his time. At the moment when it seemed probable that the northern kingdom in its entirety would become apostate from Jehovah, he flashed from obscurity and instantly dwarfed every contemporary figure. His personality had none of the subtlety or tenderness which marked the later literary prophets. He was possessed by one awful and unfaltering conviction which he only existed to deliver, and in the face of a determined and influential advocacy of the worship of Baal he forced home to the hearts of the king and the people the great, if somewhat sombre, reality of Jehovah.

But Elijah did more than insist upon the reality of the unseen God. From his time all the greatest of the prophets are social as well as religious reformers, understanding at last that due reverence cannot be rendered to God so long as the rights of the poor are unsecured. If the Christian Church has sometimes failed to side with the oppressed against the oppressor, it is not for lack of emphatic teaching on this point. The crucial instance in Elijah's life was the murder and spoliation of Naboth,

Joshua to Job

which is presented in a series of ornate drawings by an artist whom Ruskin greatly admired, Mr. T. M. Rooke (pp. 104-108). Elijah's spirit never flamed more terribly than when he poured forth his torrent of denunciation upon Ahab and Jezebel in the vineyard of the ill-fated vine dresser. It is endlessly significant that the prophet of God was as deeply moved against the despoiler of the peasant as against the idolator of Baal.

Elijah lends himself readily to artistic portrayal. Like his spiritual successor, John the Baptist, he is the true son of desert solitudes and is marked by their characteristics. In dress and manner austere as the wilderness, in character rugged and unconquerable as the hills, with something too of the massive simplicity of the far uplands, he sets forth the one great truth of which he is the sure possessor. And the scenes in which he plays a part are as individual as himself. Whether he confronts the prophets of Baal, or kneels in concentrated prayer on the brow of Mount Carmel, or lies in the sleep of utter exhaustion under the juniper tree, or attacks the king in the vineyard, or passes forth in the whirlwind of fire, the incident is always absolutely distinctive. Some of the scenes of Elisha's life may copy his. He copies no man in character, in life or in death. God took a new mould when he made Elijah.

It is perhaps only to be expected that painters should succeed best where the prophet is most human. For one inadequate representation of the conflict on Mount Carmel, the day of Elijah's strength, we have three admirable pictures of the day of reaction when he slept the sleep of dejection in the desert. Lord Leighton (p. 76) has painted a wonderful representation of exhausted strength, careless of a posture of ease even in sleep, with hopelessness evident in every line of the spare frame. But the angel, while an admirable model of Greek strength and beauty, is more or less of a decorative accessory. Domenico Feti (p. 103) has chosen the moment when Elijah is roused by the touch of the messenger. The contrast of the inert and huddled limbs of the wearied sleeper with the ready vigour of the angel poised for a moment on earth is wonderfully carried out. But the picture of

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Dirk Bouts (p. 103) is the most satisfying. It is formal in composition and neither anatomy nor drawing is perfect, but it is instinct with true feeling. The face of the sleeper is free from physical weariness, but the awful depression which rest cannot remove is plainly written there. The stooping angel, full of tender feeling, almost hesitates to recall the burdened consciousness, and yet makes us understand how the dejected prophet, ready to despair, was encouraged to eat and eat again.

Elisha presents in some ways a contrast to his master. Both could be fierce with a fierceness of spirit which our Lord rebuked, but Elijah wrought his worst on idolatrous priests and contemptuous soldiers, Elisha on insolent boys. Elisha's greatest miracle was but a repetition of Elijah's, in fact and in method. Elijah never asked exterior aid that he might be quickened to hear the whisperings of the inner voice. Elisha, on at least one occasion, sought inspiration from a musician. But why pursue the comparison? Elisha had only asked for a double portion of his master's spirit; not the whole, but the inheritance of the firstborn. He knew himself to be adequate only for a second place. Yet he showed no lack of strength of character on repeated occasions. On his deathbed all his virility of temper is apparent as he rebukes the sentimentalism of King Joash, who mourned the departing prophet with the same cry uttered on the passing of Elijah and yet would not obey with vigour a last command. And when at Dothan, encircled by the host of Syria, Elisha remains unshaken because he beholds in vision the heavenly legions, we see how worthy a successor he was of the lion-hearted prophet, for to him also the invisible had become the great reality.

Ford Madox Brown and Lord Leighton (p. 108) have given us pictures of the companion miracles of the two men which it is interesting to compare. In that of Ford Madox Brown, the unkempt Elijah, full of character and force, descends the steep stone stairway clasping the boy in a safe vigorous grip, but evidently with no instinct of tenderness for his exquisite fragility. It is in every way a masterly picture. Lord Leighton

Joshua to Job

shows us the gentler Elisha crouched above a beautiful child, who is not at all Eastern, but typically English. The prophet is clasping the little cold hands, pressing the little head with a caressing touch closer to his own. We have in the two pictures the essence of the difference between the two prophets—a difference which, one half divines, existed in some degree between the painters.

In this holy warfare on behalf of the supremacy of Jehovah, the prophets were not left entirely unsupported. When the remnant of the Jews who had returned to Judah, had rebuilt the temple in a dilatory fashion and all were completely daunted before the formidable task of rebuilding the walls of the city, it was Nehemiah, neither a priest nor a prophet, but a godly nobleman, who inspired the people to achieve in the face of incredible difficulties what they had thought impossible. Also, we can never forget that when Elijah thought himself the solitary champion of Jehovah, there were found seven thousand faithful, "all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal and every mouth which hath not kissed him." These silent patient confessors of the truth, were never without successors who slowly leavened the nation until it was filled with the unswerving conviction that Jehovah was the one true God. This was the Divine triumph. From among the peasant farmers and the city tradesfolk of the Jewish race, God unceasingly fashioned men fit to receive and treasure the revelation of His holiness and of His love, until that day when in the fulness of time the long painful story of preparation was accomplished, and the Son of the Father came to declare Him.

In these centuries of blood and treachery, out of a cloud of misunderstanding and coarse misrepresentation, the true knowledge of God emerges. He remained the mystery of mysteries, but He had become the reality of realities. In that strange crucible of personal suffering and national agony, we behold more than the making of a nation, more than the recognition of morality as an essential part of religion. We behold the revelation of God.

R. C. GILLIE

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL



SAMUEL WITH A VIAL OF OIL ANOINTS SAUL TO BE KING OVER THE LORD'S PEOPLE. (I. SAMUEL, X., 1.)



SAUL, HAVING SPARED THE LIFE OF AGAG, THE KING OF THE AMALEKITES, IS REPROVED BY SAMUEL. (I. SAMUEL, XV., 27)

FROM THE ORIGINAL WOODCUTS PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
Died in 1872



DAVID ANOINTED BY SAMUEL. (I. SAMUEL XVI., 12-13.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL CARTOON, BY PERMISSION OF THE BERLIN PHOTOGRAPHIC CO., LONDON

Alfred Rethel, German School
1816-1859



DAVID AND SAUL. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION AFTER THE ORIGINAL PICTURE, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY H. DIXON & SON

Ernest Normand, Modern British School

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL



DAVID AS A GOOD SHEPHERD. (I. SAMUEL XVII., 34-35.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL PICTURE FROM A COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO.

Madame Bouguereau, Modern French School

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL



DAVID SLAYS GOLIATH. AFTER THE ORIGINAL FRESCO IN THE CAPPELLA SISTINA, ROME
FROM A COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDERSON

Michelangelo Buonarroti, Florentine School
1475-1564



THE TRIUMPH OF DAVID. AFTER THE ORIGINAL PAINTING IN THE LOUVRE, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH
BY NEURDEIN, PARIS

Matteo Rosselli, Florentine School
1578-1650

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL



THE TRIUMPH OF DAVID, AFTER THE ORIGINAL PICTURE IN THE DULWICH GALLERY, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ HANFSTAENGL

Nicolas Poussin, French School

1594-1665

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL



JONATHAN LOVINGLY TAKETH HIS LEAVE OF DAVID. (I. SAMUEL, XX., 41.) FROM AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT PUBLISHED IN 1869 BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
Died in 1872



DAVID COMING INTO THE TRENCH STAYETH ABISHAI FROM KILLING SAUL, BUT TAKETH HIS SPEAR AND CRUSE. I. SAMUEL, XXVI., 8-9)

John Martin, British School
1789-1854

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL



SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR. "AND HE SAID UNTO HER, WHAT FORM IS HE OF? AND SHE SAID, AN OLD MAN COMETH UP; AND HE IS COVERED WITH A MANTLE. AND SAUL PERCEIVED THAT IT WAS SAMUEL, AND HE STOOPED WITH HIS FACE TO THE GROUND, AND BOWED HIMSELF," (I. SAMUEL XXVIII., 14.) MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, THE PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO.

Salvatore Rosa, Neapolitan School
1615-1673

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL



THE DEATH OF SAUL. (I. SAMUEL XXXI., 4.) FROM AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT
PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
Died in 1872



DAVID AT HEBRON IS ANOINTED KING OVER THE HOUSE OF JUDAH. (II. SAMUEL, II., 4.) FROM
AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
Died in 1872

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL



DAVID AS KING. AFTER THE ORIGINAL PAINTING IN THE LOUVRE, FROM
A PHOTOGRAPH BY NEURDEIN, PARIS

Domenico Zampieri (il Domenichino), Bolognese School
1581-1641



DAVID AS KING. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH
BY F. HOLLYER, LONDON

D. G. Rossetti, British School
1828-1882

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL



"AND DAVID SENT TO JOAB, SAYING, SEND ME URIAH THE HITTITE." II. SAMUEL XI, 6, AFTER THE ORIGINAL PAINTING IN THE DRESDEN GALLERY, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ HANFSTAENGL

Govaert Flinck, Dutch School
1615-1660

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL



NATHAN REPROVING DAVID FOR HIS CRIME

(II. SAMUEL XII., 7)

Richard Westall, R.A., British School
1765-1836



DAVID MOURNETH AND PRAYETH FOR THE CHILD, WHILE IT LIVED. (II. SAMUEL XII., 16.) FROM AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
Died in 1872

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL



THE RECONCILIATION OF DAVID AND ABSALOM. (II, SAMUEL XIV., 33.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL PAINTING AT ST. PETERSBURG, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY F. HANFSTAENGL, LONDON

Rembrandt, Dutch School
1606-1669

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL



THE DEATH OF ABSALOM. (II. SAMUEL, XVIII, 9.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL CARTOON, REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE BERLIN PHOTOGRAPHIC CO., LONDON

Alfred Rethel, German School
1816-1859

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL



CUSHI BRINGS TIDINGS TO DAVID OF THE DEATH OF ABSALOM. (II. SAMUEL, XVIII., 32.) REPRODUCED AFTER THE PLATE MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY, 1886)

W. Small, Modern British School

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL



RIZPAH. AS AN ATONEMENT TO THE GIBEONITES FOR THREE YEARS OF FAMINE, THE TWO SONS THAT RIZPAH BARE UNTO SAUL, AND THE FIVE SONS OF MICHAL THE DAUGHTER OF SAUL, WERE HANGED: "AND RIZPAH THE DAUGHTER OF AIAH TOOK SACKCLOTH, AND SPREAD IT FOR HER UPON THE ROCK, FROM THE BEGINNING OF HARVEST UNTIL WATER DROPPED UPON THEM OUT OF HEAVEN, AND SUFFERED NEITHER THE BIRDS OF THE AIR TO REST ON THEM BY DAY, NOR THE BEASTS OF THE FIELD BY NIGHT." (II. SAMUEL XXI., 10.) FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRY DIXON & SON

Lord Leighton, P.R.A., Modern British School
1830-1896

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL



BENAIH, "AND BENAIH THE SON OF JEHOIADA, THE SON OF A VALIANT MAN, OF KATZEL, WHO HAD DONE MANY ACTS, HE SLEW TWO LIONLIKE MEN OF NOAH," (II. SAMUEL, XXIII., 30.) AFTER THE PAINTING IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF SCOTLAND FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. A. MANSELL & CO., LONDON

William Etty, R.A., British School

1787-1849

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES



DAVID GIVING DIRECTIONS TO SOLOMON FOR THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE. (I. CHRONICLES, XXII., 6.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL DESIGN FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY F. HOLLYER, LONDON

Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Bart., Modern British School
1833-1898

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL

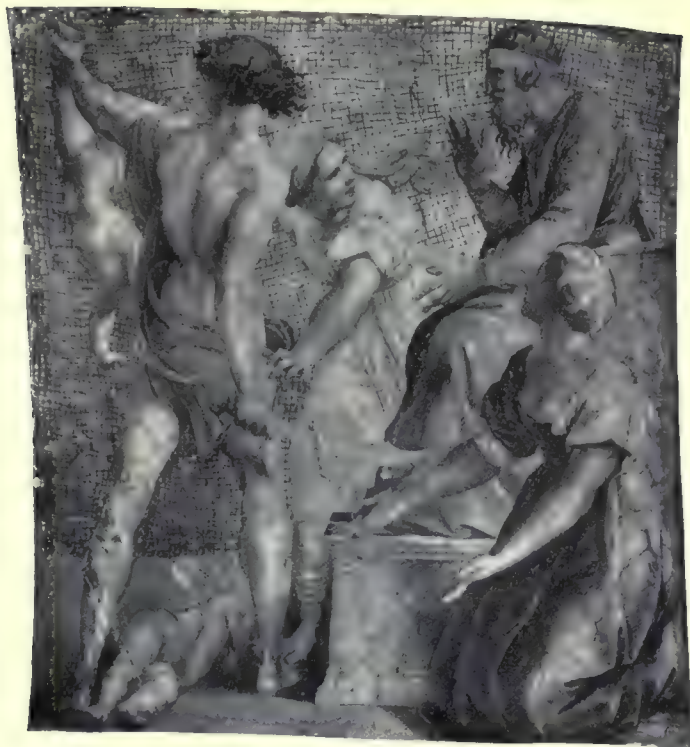


RIZPAH

Briton Riviere, R.A., Modern British School

II. SAMUEL, XXI., 10

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS



THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDERSON
AFTER THE FRESCO IN THE CAPELLA SISTINA

Raffaello Sanzio (Raphael of Urbino), Roman School
1483-1520



THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON. (I. KINGS III., 16-27.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL PAINTING AT VENICE IN THE
ROYAL ACADEMY, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDERSON, ROME

Bonifazio Veronese, Venetian School
1491-1553

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS



THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON. (I. KINGS III., 24-27) AFTER THE PAINTING IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF SCOTLAND, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. A. MANSELL & CO., LONDON

William Dyce, R.A., British School
1806-1864



SOLOMON AND THE QUEEN OF SHEBA. (I. KINGS, X. 2.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL PAINTING IN THE COLLECTION OF THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ HANFSTAENGL

Eustache Le Sueur, French School
1617-1655

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS



SOLOMON'S IDOLATRY. (I. KINGS XI. 4.) FROM THE
PAINTING IN THE RIJCKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM. THE
PHOTOGRAPH BY HANFSTAENGL

Willem de Poorter, Dutch School
17th Century



SOLOMON'S SACRIFICE OF PEACE OFFERINGS. (I. KINGS VIII., 62.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL PICTURE AT ST.
PETERSBURG, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ HANFSTAENGL

Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, Dutch School
1621-1674

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS



THE WIFE OF JEROBOAM AND AHIJAH, THE BLIND PROPHET. (I. KINGS, XIV., 1-6.) FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY
H. DIXON & SON

G. Grenville Manton, Modern British School

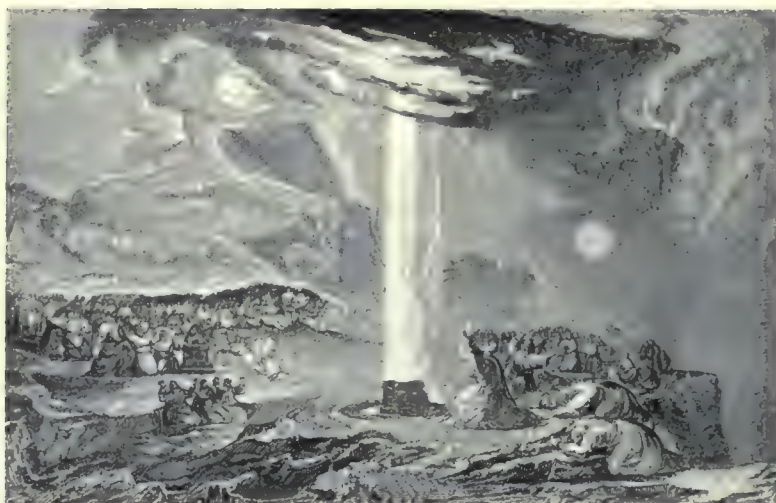
THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS



THE DISOBEDIENT PROPHET. "AND WHEN HE WAS GONE, A LION MET HIM BY THE WAY, AND SLEW HIM: AND HIS CARCASE WAS CAST IN THE WAY, AND THE ASS STOOD BY IT, THE LION ALSO STOOD BY THE CARCASE." (I. KINGS XIII., 24.)

P. Harland Fisher, Modern British School

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS



ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE

I. KINGS XVIII., 38

John Martin, British School
1789-1854



ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL. "AND ELIJAH BROUGHT THEM DOWN TO THE BROOK KISHON, AND SLEW THEM THERE." (I. KINGS XVIII., 40.) FROM A WOODCUT PUBLISHED IN 1860 BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
Died in 1872



ELIJAH AND THE ANGEL. AFTER THE PAINTING IN THE BERLIN GALLERY.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY HANFSTAENGL, LONDON

Domenico Feti, Roman School
1589-1624

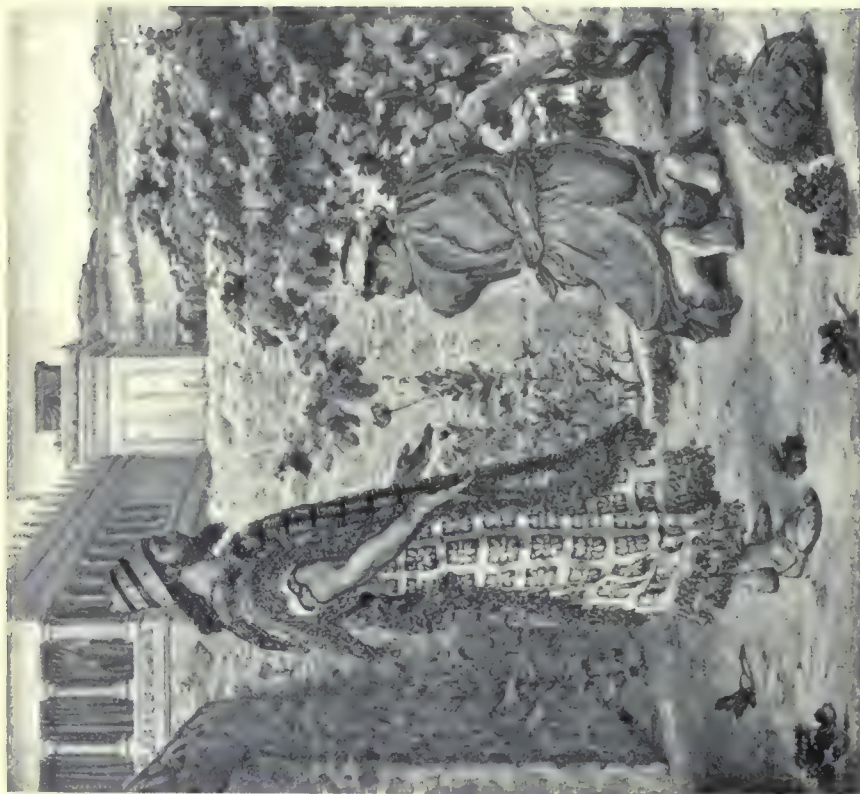


ELIJAH AND THE ANGEL. AFTER THE PAINTING IN THE BERLIN GALLERY, FROM
A PHOTOGRAPH BY HANFSTAENGL, LONDON

Dirk Bouts, Flemish School
1391-1475



AHAB COVETING NABOTH'S VINEYARD. "AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER THESE THINGS, THAT NABOTH THE JEZREELITE HAD A VINEYARD, WHICH WAS IN JEZREEL, HARD BY THE PALACE OF AHAB, KING OF SAMARIA. (I. KINGS XXI., 1.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL PICTURES IN THE COLLECTION OF MERTON RUSSELL-COTES, ESQ., F.R.G.S.



AHAB AND NABOTH. "AND AHAB SPAKE UNTO NABOTH, SAYING, GIVE ME THY VINEYARD, THAT I MAY HAVE IT FOR A GARDEN OF HERBS, BECAUSE IT IS NEAR UNTO MY HOUSE: AND I WILL GIVE THEE FOR IT A BETTER VINEYARD THAN IT."

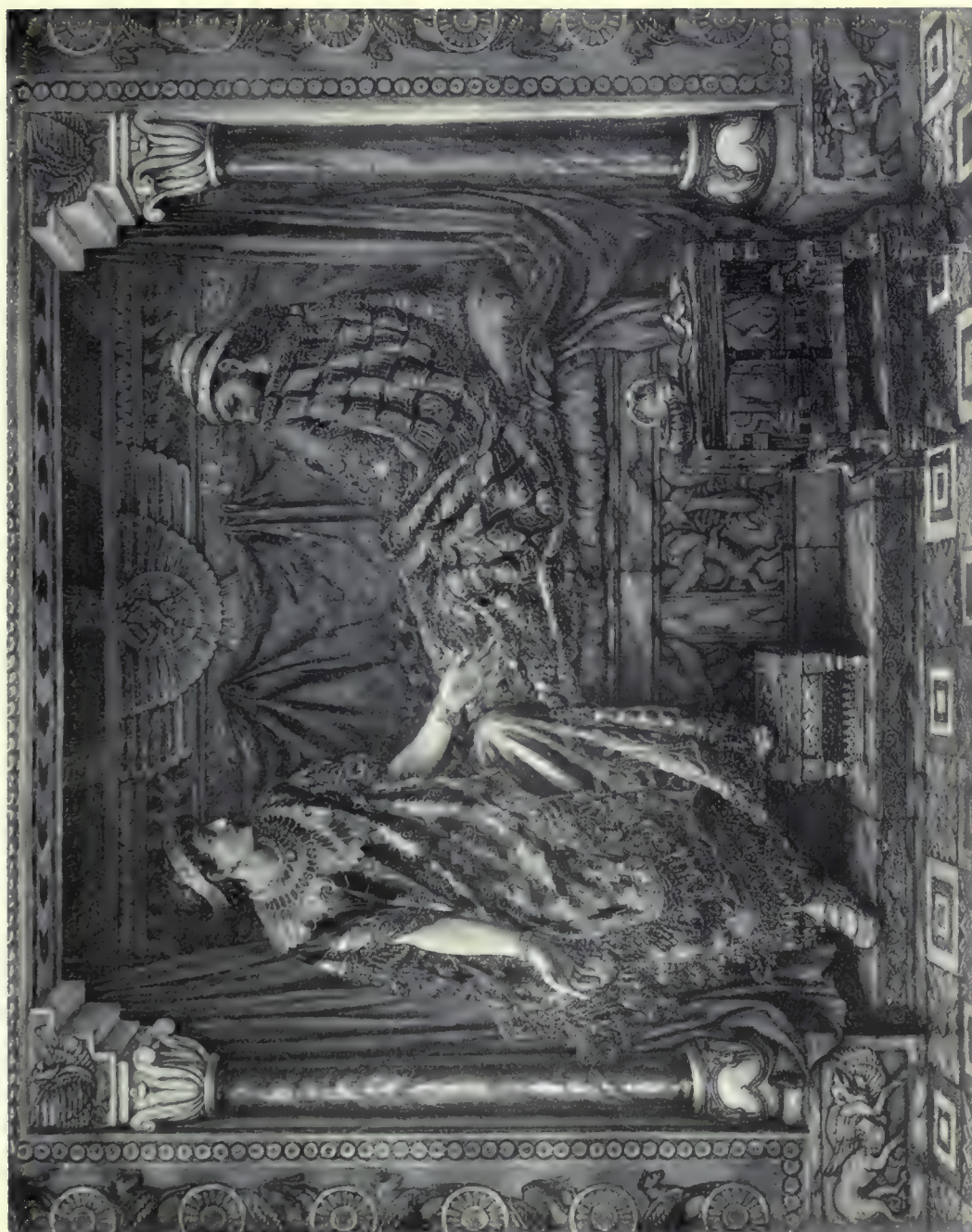
T. M. Rooke, R.W.S., Modern British School

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS



ELIJAH, IN THE MIDST OF THE DESCENDING FIRE BY WHICH THE WATER IN THE TRENCHES IS LICKED UP INTO BOILING STEAM, FERVENTLY APPEALS TO ISRAEL, BY OPEN ATTESTATION OF HIS MISSION, TO CHOOSE WHOM THEY WILL SERVE—THE LORD OR BAAL. AFTER THE PAINTING IN THE CHAPEL OF THE ASCENSION, BAYSWATER ROAD, LONDON

Frederic Shields, Modern British School



AHAB AND JEZEBEL. "AND AHAB CAME INTO HIS HOUSE HEAVY AND DISPLEASED BECAUSE OF THE WORD WHICH NABOTH THE JEZREELITE HAD SPOKEN TO HIM: FOR HE HAD SAID, I WILL NOT GIVE THEE THE INHERITANCE OF MY FATHERS, AND HE LAID HIM DOWN UPON HIS BED, AND TURNED AWAY HIS FACE, AND WOULD EAT NO BREAD: BUT JEZEBEL HIS WIFE CAME TO HIM . . ." (I. KINGS XXI., 45) AFTER THE ORIGINAL PICTURE IN THE COLLECTION OF MERTON RUSSELL-COTES, ESQ., F.R.G.S.

T. M. Rooke, R.W.S., Modern British School

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS



ELIJAH CONFRONTING AHAB IN NABOTH'S VINEYARD. AFTER THE ORIGINAL PICTURE IN THE COLLECTION OF MERTON RUSSELL-COTES, ESQ., F.R.G.S.

T. M. Rooke, R.W.S., Modern British School

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS



THE DEATH OF AHAB. (I. KINGS XXII., 34-35.) AFTER THE PICTURE IN THE COLLECTION OF MERTON RUSSELL-COTES, ESQ., F.R.G.S.

T. M. Rooke, R.W.S., Modern British School



THE TRANSLATION OF ELIJAH. (II. KINGS II., 11.) FROM A WOODCUT PUBLISHED BY GEORG WIGAND

Julius Schnorr, Modern German School
Died in 1872

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS



THE DEATH OF JEZEBEL. (II. KINGS IX., 33.) AFTER THE PICTURE IN THE COLLECTION OF MERTON RUSSELL-COTES, ESQ., F.R.G.S.

T. M. Rooke, R.W.S., Modern British School



ELISHA RAISING THE SON OF THE SHUNAMMITE. (II. KINGS IV., 34.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL PICTURE FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRED HOLLYER, LONDON

Lord Leighton, P.R.A., Modern British School
1830-1896

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS



ELIJAH RESTORING THE WIDOW'S SON. "AND THE LORD HEARD THE VOICE OF ELIJAH: AND THE SOUL OF THE CHILD CAME INTO HIM AGAIN, AND HE REVIVED, AND ELIJAH TOOK THE CHILD, AND BROUGHT HIM DOWN OUT OF THE CHAMBER INTO THE HOUSE, AND DELIVERED HIM UNTO HIS MOTHER" (I. KINGS, XVII., 22-23.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL WATER-COLOUR IN THE SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. A. MANSELL & CO.

Ford Madox Brown, Modern British School
1821-1893



THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS



NAAMAN'S WIFE AND THE LITTLE CAPTIVE MAID. "AND SHE SAID UNTO HER MISTRESS, WOULD GOD MY LORD WERE WITH THE PROPHET THAT IS IN SAMARIA! FOR HE WOULD RECOVER HIM OF HIS LEPROSY." (II. KINGS V., 3.)

Frank W. W. Topham, R.I., Modern British School

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES



JOASH SAVED BY JEHOShABEATH, THE DAUGHTER OF KING JEHORAM. (II. CHRONICLES XXII., 11.) FROM A WOODCUT BY W. BRANSTON

R. Westall, R.A., British School
1765-1836



ATHALIAH, IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD, SEES JOASH HAILED AS KING. (II. CHRONICLES XXIII., 13.) REPRODUCED FROM AN ENGRAVING BY AUDRAN

Antoine Coyppel, French School
1661-1722



AN ANGEL SLAYETH THE ARMY OF SENNACHERIB. (II. KINGS XIX., 35.) AFTER THE ORIGINAL DRAWING AT VIENNA IN THE ALBERTINA COLLECTION
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLEMENT & CO., PARIS

Peter Paul Rubens, Flemish School

1577-1640

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH



NEHEMIAH, HAVING ARMED THE LABOURERS, REBUILDS THE WALL OF JERUSALEM. REPRODUCED FROM AN ORIGINAL WOODCUT, PUBLISHED IN 1866, BY GEORG WIGAND, LEIPZIG

Julius Schnorr, German School
Died in 1872

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS, chap. xxiv.



THE JEWS TAKEN CAPTIVE INTO BABYLON. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE BERLIN PHOTOGRAPHIC CO., LONDON

Eduard Bendemann, Modern German School
1811-1889

The Book of Esther

By the Rev. J. Macartney Wilson, M.A.



WE know that this is a book whose place in the Canon has often been disputed, because there is so little religion in it, because the name of God is not found in it, because it is not quoted in the New Testament, and because the story which it contains is difficult to reconcile with the testimony of the records of the time. These difficulties are not raised by the Jews, to whom this book is one of the dearest in the Bible. It is among the five books which are called Megilloth or Rolls, and in time it came to be called the Roll *par excellence*. It is easy to see why this should be so, because the story of Esther is one which makes special appeal to every Jewish heart. It shows that people persecuted as they have so often been, yet by the help of God turning the tables on their adversaries; it shows them winning a dramatic triumph over those who would have oppressed them. It is only natural that a people so cruelly mishandled as the Jews have been, should see in this book the realisation of their dearest dreams, and should enshrine it in their hearts as the special treasure of their literature. In this book the national pride of the Jews, which grew to such colossal proportions as to become the great national sin, found its perfect expression, just as it found its most crushing condemnation in the book of Jonah.

And if we were to take the opinion of artists, who are possibly not the best of judges, we should find them voting unanimously for its retention in the Canon. For the book of Esther offers great opportunities to painter and graver, opportunities of which they have taken frequent advantage. The story of Esther is full of such scenes as artists love to depict; it contains a succession of vivid and dramatic pictures, gorgeously framed in the splendidly luxurious setting of an Oriental court.

Joshua to Job

It sets before us a company of people profoundly interesting, men and women who are markedly individual, and yet are easily understood because they are universal types. Hence it is not surprising that the subject has appealed to men of all different schools and all epochs of artistic activity. The selected illustrations show how universal has been the appeal which this book has made ; how it has appealed to the Italian sense of proportion and grace and of what constitutes a perfect womanly beauty ; how it has appealed to the French love of courtly scenes and feminine adornment ; how it has lent itself to the unerring line of Rembrandt ; how the German has made use of it to show his love for mighty buildings, and how the Englishman has been inspired by its problems of character

The first character that attracts us is the deposed queen Vashti, a personage to whom sufficient justice has scarcely been done. Only one thing is told us of her, but that is entirely to her credit. When the King, after a long-continued feast, was mellow with wine, he desired her to come out and show her beauty to the nobles and the people. The manners and customs of the time were such that the request outraged the modesty of the Queen, and she very properly refused to make a show of herself, even though it was the husband and king who commanded. The authority of the king was absolutely despotic, and the one thing a despot cannot tolerate is disobedience to his commands. As a result of her disobedience she was deposed from her high place, disgraced and sent away ; for what was a woman's modesty when set against a despot's command ? Esther wins all sympathies, and Vashti, not only in popular esteem, but in art also, has been rather left out in the cold.

Injustice has thus been done to a woman who deserved a better fate. The command laid upon her was cruel and unjust, and she did perfectly right in disobeying it. For her courage in daring to disobey her lord and master in order that she might preserve her modesty, Vashti should win our esteem ; and all women who care for what is best in womanhood should pay her the meed of their admiration and praise

The Book of Esther

For Ahasuerus not much can be said, except that he was a typical oriental despot, who was accustomed to get his own way in everything, and whose passions were quite unrestrained. Throughout the whole story he never does one good act from a good motive ; it is the beauty of Esther, that and nothing else which leads him to do what he does for the Jews. Esther could twist him round her little finger. It is interesting to compare the various representations that are given of him in the various pictures. These are mostly sympathetic in their point of view, giving us a more or less conventional presentation of a monarch, generally more or less aged, with the benevolence of his mood showing in his features. He has certainly had more than justice at the hands of the painters, whether he wears the god-like front that Poussin gives him, the virility and tenderness that Veronese depicts, or the gentle and respectful considerateness that marks him in the picture by François de Troy. Possibly the fact that commentators have always, with the perversity of their kind, compared him to God himself, is answerable for this ; the fact remains that not once do we see him influenced by a high motive throughout the course of the history.

The two male characters on whom the author has expended most pains are Haman and Mordecai ; the result is that they stand before us with great vividness as real human beings. They are contrasted portraits, and the very contrast between them helps to set each in a clearer light. Mordecai, we can feel, is no longer young ; he is very wise, and can wait a long time in order to realise his purpose ; Haman is passionate and hasty. Each has deep-laid plans, but Mordecai looks further ahead. Each is proud, but whilst the pride of Mordecai is for his nation, the pride of Haman consists largely of personal vanity. Mordecai is of the type that is obstinate and tenacious and slow-working ; Haman flares out at once and demands instant satisfaction of his desires. Between these two men grows up a steadfast hatred, upon which the story dramatically turns. By the order of the king, Haman receives the salutations of men ; one man, and one only, fails to render him the salute that is his due. As

Joshua to Job

Haman passes in and out of the palace, he is continually irritated by the sight of the Jew Mordecai, who stands erect when all the others are bowing themselves to the ground. This continual fret wrought like madness in the mind of Haman. The scene is graphically portrayed by Mr. Ernest Normand in the illustration on page 124. Haman determined to be revenged, not only on Mordecai, but also on the whole accursed race to which he belonged. He planned a great slaughter of the Jews ; he coaxed a decree from the King that on the thirteenth day of the month Adar there should be a great killing all over the kingdom, and he paid 10,000 talents of silver into the treasury to meet expenses. But he forgot or was ignorant of two facts, and the omission was fatal. He did not know that Mordecai had once saved the king's life, and he was ignorant of the fact that Esther was a Jewess. From the first fact, which was recalled to the King's memory by the chronicle of it being read to him one night when he could not sleep (see page 126), came the exaltation of Mordecai, which by the irony of circumstances Haman himself had determined. The triumph of Mordecai has always been a favourite subject with painters. The two illustrations given on page 127 are well worthy of study. The English artist is interested in the portrayal of a great scene, with mighty buildings and crowded multitudes, in which Mordecai himself is almost insignificant. Small though this illustration is, it gives one a sense of spaciousness and distance and solidity and grandeur. The other illustration is from a fine etching by Rembrandt, that supreme master of line. Rembrandt is not mainly interested in the buildings ; they are deliberately subordinated and serve as background ; but here, as ever, he is eager to set before us the men he is portraying. We have but to look at this etching to feel that he cares passionately for humanity, for human faces and figures ; we can see that he counts nothing worthy of study but man. In Picart's presentment of the same subject, interesting in spite of the pseudo-classicalism that belonged to his time, we have both humanity and buildings combined ; but the buildings are neither so grand nor so massive as Martin's, whilst the humanity is purely conventional, and

The Book of Esther

cannot stand comparison with the work of the great etcher, Rembrandt.

The fact that Esther was a Jewess (the second fact of which Haman was ignorant) put a deadly weapon into the hands of the subtle Mordecai, and brought about the complete downfall of Haman. Haman was unaware of the circumstance that by the decree he had elicited from the King the Queen was doomed to death. Esther invited the King and Haman to a feast at which she denounced Haman as plotting against her life and against her people. The King went from the room in wrath, and Haman fell down by the couch of Esther to plead for his life. The King came back, and, misinterpreting Haman's attitude, doomed him to instant death. We read the significant words :— " They covered Haman's face." He was hanged on the gallows he had built for Mordecai. The scenes of the feast are portrayed in pp. 131-133. So is poetic justice meted out to Haman.

The main character of the story is, of course, the Jewess from whom it takes its name. Esther is a simple Jewish girl, who has been adopted as a daughter by her relative Mordecai. From this lowly position she is raised in one day to be the wife of the greatest monarch in the world, and the greatest lady in the land, with supreme power in her hands so long as she maintained her influence over the King.

When Vashti was disgraced and dismissed, it was necessary that another wife should be chosen for the King. This was done by means of a great competition, in which the prize was to be given to the lady who was most beautiful and most witty. Esther, who must have been both in a high degree, carried off the prize, but concealed the fact that she belonged to the despised nation of the Jews. Jewish women have often been lovely and vivacious, and the story of Poppæa and Nero may serve as a sort of parallel to that of Esther and Ahasuerus.

Esther, we may suppose, was frankly seeking her own advancement in the world ; and no one ever attained the object of desire with such amazing rapidity. Then there came a call to Esther that awakened all that was best in her nature,

Joshua to Job

and appealed to that unselfishness which has so deep a root in the heart of woman. Mordecai told her that her nation was in danger, and that she alone could save her people ; she must go in to the King and plead for them. There was great risk to her in doing so ; for the King had determined that any one who went in to him without invitation should die, unless he extended to such a person his golden sceptre as a token of the royal forgiveness and favour. Esther possessed all that ambition could ask for, yet for the sake of her own people she was willing to risk all, even life itself. " If I perish, I perish," she said. In that moment of self-sacrifice there was something of the heroic about her. How she succeeded in her quest we know ; Haman was overthrown and hanged, and another decree was issued to authorise the Jews to resist their enemies by force. The Jews triumphed over their enemies, and Mordecai became the favourite and Vizier of the King. Esther was not wholly free from vindictiveness ; we cannot admire her when she asks for a second day's slaughter, and demands that the dead bodies of the ten sons of Haman shall be hanged on the gallows ; but we must not expect too high a standard of morality from the men and women of these ancient times, especially when we remember that the atmosphere of a court is not always calculated to develop the finest side of human nature.

The painters have been specially attracted by four scenes in the story of Esther :—Esther being chosen and crowned, Esther touching the golden sceptre, Esther at the feast with the King and Haman, and Esther pleading for the Jews. Of the choosing of Esther there are two illustrations, both Italian ; one (p. 123), a quaintly beautiful, passionless thing of the Florentine School of the fifteenth century ; in it two rejected maidens cross the foreground, two expectant candidates approach in the background, and in the centre Esther is seen accepted and crowned. Curiously resembling this last, yet showing a suave grace and delicacy, with a mastery of technique, that are not to be found in the other, is the picture by Filippino Lippi given on p. 130. Seven maidens pass before the King, ushered in and shown out

The Book of Esther

by the listless attendants, to whom the whole business is evidently a bore. These ladies are all slim and sweet and graceful, and all wear a half-affected look of maiden modesty ; they move across the picture with a sort of stately grace reminiscent of Courts. Note the beautiful line that is made by their heads, and the subtle fashion in which it is broken by the heads of the two ushers. Esther is the maiden on the extreme left of the picture. Of Esther touching the golden sceptre one picture is given, the work of Veronese (p. 125), finely conceived and composed. The same subject, however, recurs in the composite pictures given on pp. 129 and 131. Three illustrations are given of Esther pleading for the Jews. In the picture by Veronese a very matronly Esther is supported by two Ladies-in-Waiting, and the group in which the King is set is particularly remarkable. Special notice should be taken of a picture by Poussin. He sought always to give dramatic expression to all his faces and figures, and he loves to depict action. There is action here ; yet with all his movement he succeeds in conveying a sense of classical calm. The King reminds us of Jove, and Esther of Niobe.

A word or two should be said to aid in the comprehension of the composite pictures given on pp. 129-131 of this book. A patron was wont to give a commission for a painting to illustrate a story. He felt he would like to have a series of pictures, so that the whole story might be seen by those who looked at the pictures, but he could not afford to commission such a series. The artist sometimes did what he could to meet this desire of his patron, and he did it in a rather naïve fashion. He composed the picture as an artistic whole, but he set in different parts of it different scenes from the story to be illustrated. Some readers will recall the engraving that used to be set at the beginning of the Pilgrim's Progress, in which Christian is seen in different parts of the picture passing through different experiences of his journey.

Three composite pictures are given here, and each shows the spirit and sympathies of the school to which it belongs. The first, by an unknown artist belonging to the German School

Joshua to Job

of the sixteenth century, is of great interest, though difficult to decipher. He is a lover of colossal buildings, beside which men look insignificant ; he is also interested in the busy movement of the thronged streets, of which he gives us a vivid presentment ; but one feels he cares more for these things than the story of Esther. The details are very confused, and it is not easy to find more than a very few scenes of which we can be certain that they refer to the story of Esther. On the right, in the foreground, Esther comes forth in royal robes, attended by a train of court ladies. On the left, she touches the outstretched sceptre. In the centre, in the nearer of the two tall buildings, a feast is going on, and in the room on the right we seem to catch a glimpse of Esther and the King at table. In Lippi's picture, in addition to the main scene, which has already been commented on, some other scenes are disposed in the background ; but these are strictly subordinated to the main action, and are mainly decorative in effect. On the right we see Esther crowned, and Esther at a feast. On the left, Esther feasts with the King, and some suppliants are kneeling before the table. There may be some reference here to the story of Haman. The third picture is by Frans Francken, of the Flemish School of the sixteenth century, and shows the sympathy of that school with the rude popular life of men. On the right, Esther denounces Haman ; above, she touches the sceptre ; on the left Haman leads forth Mordecai in triumph ; and in the background Haman is being hanged on the gallows. The whole is composed and depicted with much skill and vivacity.

All these illustrations form a valuable commentary on the book, and help to make its scenes live before our eyes.

J. MACARTNEY WILSON.



VASHTI DEPOSED. "IF IT PLEASE THE KING, LET THERE GO A ROYAL COMMANDMENT FROM HIM, AND LET IT BE WRITTEN AMONG THE LAWS OF THE PERSIANS AND THE MEDES, THAT IT BE NOT ALTERED, THAT VASHTI COME NO MORE BEFORE KING AHASUERUS; AND LET THE KING GIVE HER ROYAL ESTATE UNTO ANOTHER THAT IS BETTER THAN SHE." (ESTHER I., VERSE 19)

Ernest Normand, Modern British School

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



ESTHER BEING ROBED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE KING. AFTER THE PAINTING IN THE LOUVRE, PARIS, FROM
A PHOTOGRAPH BY NEURDEIN

Jean François de Troy, French School
1679-1752

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



ESTHER CROWNED. "AND THE KING LOVED ESTHER ABOVE ALL THE WOMEN, . . . SO THAT HE SET THE ROYAL CROWN UPON HER HEAD, AND MADE HER QUEEN INSTEAD OF VASHTI." (ESTHER II., VERSE 17) MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, PARIS, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., PARIS

Florentine School, XV. Century



MORDECAI REFUSING TO DO REVERENCE TO HAMAN. "AFTER THESE THINGS DID KING AHASUERUS PROMOTE HAMAN THE SON OF HAMMATHA THE AGAGITE, AND SET HIS SEAT ABOVE ALL THE PRINCES THAT WERE WITH HIM; AND ALL THE KING'S SERVANTS, THAT WERE IN THE KING'S GATE, BOWED, AND REVERENCED HAMAN: FOR THE KING HAD SO COMMANDED CONCERNING HIM. BUT MORDECAI BOWED NOT, NOR DID HIM REVERENCE." ESTHER III., VERSES 1-2

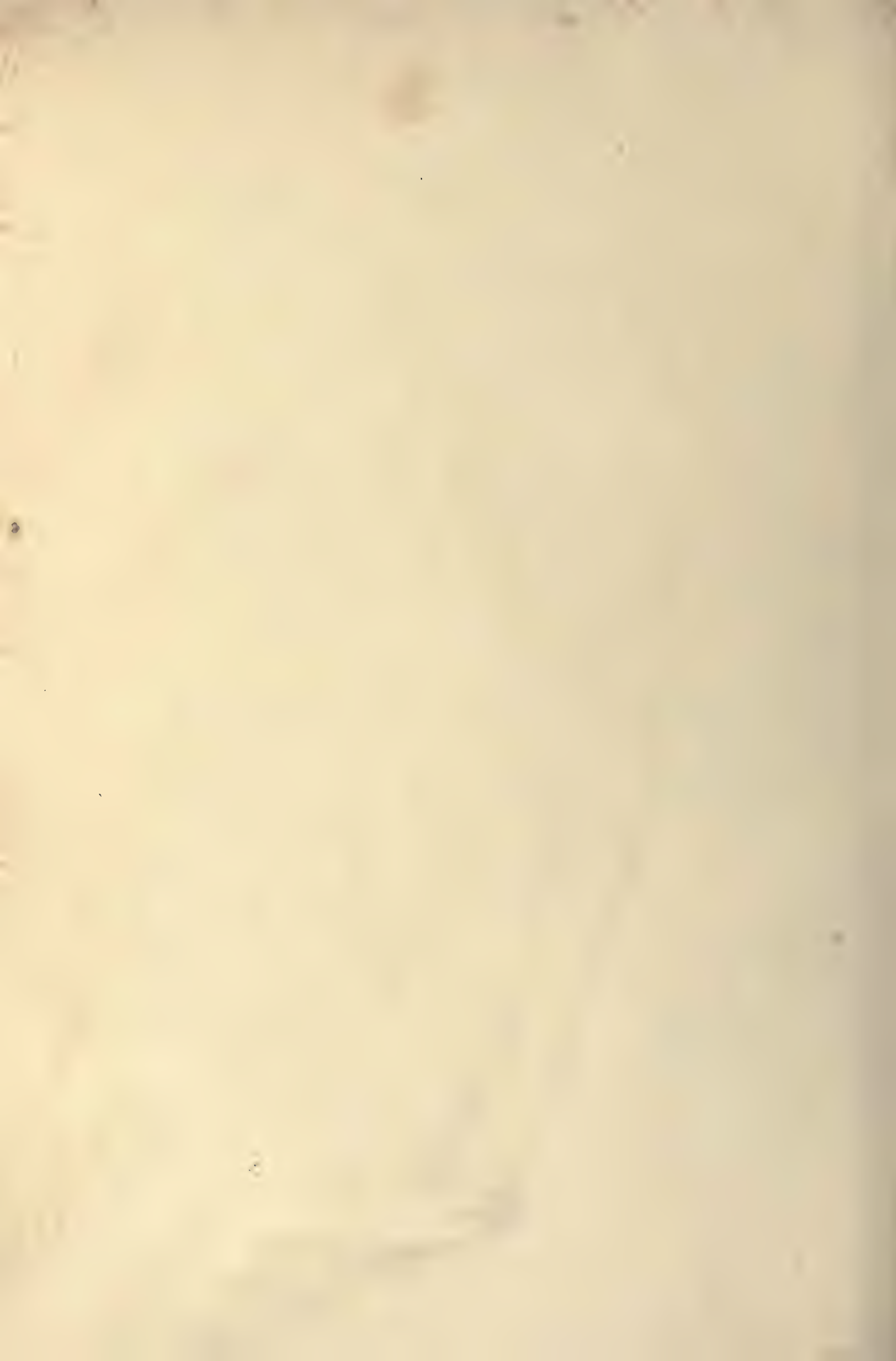
Ernest Normand, Modern British School

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



ESTHER PRESENTING HERSELF BEFORE AHASUERUS. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN,
CLÉMENT & CO., PARIS

Félix Joseph Barrias, Modern French School



THE BOOK OF ESTHER



ESTHER BEFORE AHASUERUS, "AND IT WAS SO, WHEN THE KING SAW ESTHER THE QUEEN STANDING IN THE COURT, THAT SHE OBTAINED FAVOUR IN HIS SIGHT: AND THE KING HELD OUT TO ESTHER THE GOLDEN SCEPTRE THAT WAS IN HIS HAND." (ESTHER V., VERSE 2)

UFFIZI GALLERY, FLORENCE. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY G. BROGI

Paolo Caliari (Paolo Veronese), Venetian School
1528-1588

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



AHASUERUS, READING IN THE CHRONICLES OF THE GOOD SERVICE DONE BY MORDECAI, TAKETH CARE FOR HIS REWARD. "ON THAT NIGHT COULD NOT THE KING SLEEP, AND HE COMMANDED TO BRING THE BOOK OF RECORDS OF THE CHRONICLES; AND THEY WERE READ BEFORE THE KING." (ESTHER VI., VERSE 1) REPRODUCED FROM THE PLATE MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY, 1880)

Arthur Boyd Houghton, Modern British School
1836-1875

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



THE TRIUMPH OF MORDECAI.

FROM A WOODCUT BY T. MOSSES

J. Martin. British School
1789-1854



THE TRIUMPH OF MORDECAI. FROM THE ORIGINAL ETCHING AT DRESDEN, AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY
BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., PARIS

Rembrandt. Dutch School
1606-1669

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



HAMAN AND THE TRIUMPH OF MORDECAI. "THEN TOOK HAMAN THE APPAREL AND THE HORSE, AND ARRAYED MORDECAI, AND BROUGHT HIM ON HORSEBACK THROUGH THE STREET OF THE CITY, AND PROCLAIMED BEFORE HIM, THIS SHALL IT BE DONE UNTO THE MAN WHOM THE KING DELIGHTETH TO HONOUR." (ESTHER VI., VERSE II.)

B. Picart, French School

1663-1733

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



THE HISTORY OF ESTHER

THE IMPERIAL MUSEUM, VIENNA

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO.

German School, XVI. Century

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



THE HISTORY OF ESTHER AND AHASUERUS. THIS COMPOSITE PICTURE, IN ARRANGEMENT LIKE A FRIEZE, REPRESENTS, IN THE FOREGROUND, THE MAIDENS FROM AMONG WHOM THE KING CHOOSES ESTHER; BEHIND, ON THE RIGHT AND ON THE LEFT, THE BANQUET SCENES ARE GIVEN. AFTER THE PICTURE AT CHANTILLY, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., PARIS

Filippino Lippi, Florentine School
about 1459-1504



THE HISTORY OF ESTHER, SHOWING FOUR SCENES IN ONE PICTURE. 1. ESTHER AT TABLE DENOUNCES HAMAN TO THE KING. 2. ESTHER PLEADS BEFORE THE KING TO PREVENT THE PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS. 3. ON THE LEFT, ACCOMPANIED BY HAMAN, MORDECAI RIDES FORTH ON HIS TRIUMPH. 4. IN THE DISTANCE BEYOND, HAMAN IS BEING HANGED ON THE GALLOWS THAT HE HAD PREPARED FOR MORDECAI. MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO.

Frans Franck or Francken the Elder, Flemish School
1542-1616

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



ESTHER DENOUNCING HAMAN. "AND ESTHER SAID, THE ADVERSARY AND ENEMY IS THIS WICKED HAMAN. THEN HAMAN WAS AFRAID BEFORE THE KING AND THE QUEEN." ESTHER VII. VERSE 6.

Ernest Normand, Modern British School

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



HAMAN MAKES REQUEST FOR HIS LIFE TO ESTHER THE QUEEN (CHAPTER VII. VERSE 7). REPRODUCED FROM THE PLATE MADE BY MESSRS. GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS (DALZIEL'S BIBLE GALLERY, 1880)

E. F. Brewtnall, R.W.S., Modern British School
1850-1902

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



ESTHER PLEADS BEFORE THE KING TO SAVE THE JEWS FROM PERSECUTION. "AND ESTHER SPAKE YET AGAIN BEFORE THE KING, . . . AND BESOUGHT HIM WITH TEARS TO PUT AWAY THE MISCHIEF OF HAMAN THE AGAGITE, AND HIS DEVICE THAT HE HAD DEVISED AGAINST THE JEWS." ESTHER VIII., VERSE 3. MUSEE DU LOUVRE, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO.

Paolo Caliari (Paolo Veronese), Venetian School
1528-1588

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



THE QUEEN MAKETH SUIT TO REVERSE THE DECREE OF THE KING TO PUT THE JEWS TO DEATH (ESTHER, CHAPTER VIII, VERSE 3)

Nicolas Poussin, French School

1594-1665

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



ESTHER MAKETH SUIT TO REVERSE HAMAN'S LETTERS. "AND ESTHER SPAKE YET AGAIN BEFORE THE KING, AND FELL DOWN AT HIS FEET, AND BESOUGHT HIM WITH TEARS TO PUT AWAY THE MISCHIEF OF HAMAN THE AGAGITE, AND HIS DEVICE THAT HE HAD DEVISED AGAINST THE JEWS." (ESTHER VIII., VERSE 3.) MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., PARIS

Jean François de Troy, French School.
1679-1752

THE BOOK OF JOB

On Earth which art in Heaven

hallowed be thy Name



Thus did Job continually

There was a Man in the
Land of Uz whose Name
was Job. & that Man
was perfect & upright

The Letter Kethub
The Spirit giveth Life
It is Spiritually Discerned

& one that feared God
& eschewed Evil & there
was born unto him Seven
Sons & Three Daughters

W. Blake inv. & sculp

London. Published as the Act directs. March 8. 1828. by Wm. Blake 53. Tottenham Court Road.

William Blake, British School
1757-1827

The Book of Job

By the Rev. J. Macartney Wilson, M.A.



It is told of Thomas Carlyle that on one occasion, when he was staying with a friend, he was asked to conduct family worship. The household was assembled, and Carlyle, opening the Bible, began to read aloud the Book of Job from the beginning. Chapter after chapter was read, and still there was no sign that he intended to make any end. Nor did he rise from his seat until he had read the book through, word by word, to the last sentence. It must have been delightful to observe the embarrassment of the master of the house, and the half-amused impatience of the domestics, for whom this was a novelty in the way of family worship; but above all, to watch the eyes of the sage kindle and his face glow, as he read aloud the obscure, but magnificent, words of the book which, more than any other in the Bible, made appeal to the deepest emotions of his soul. And his case was not a solitary one. When the soul of man is touched to the highest and finest issues, it is ready to receive and to love the beauty of this book. The drift of its message is sometimes hard to divine. Not only is the text corrupt, and the translation (in the Authorised Version) often faulty, but we remember also that the mind of the writer is at times overburdened by the weight and the glory of the thoughts that seek expression. Yet behind it all, the real presence of a loving Father is divined, and the wonder of the thoughts of the Almighty.

It is curious to observe that Art has rarely busied itself with the Book of Job, the reason probably being that it is too high and too spiritual. Being little concerned with material symbols, it fails to attract sufficient attention from painters and gravers. Fortunately, there came into the world one man who, by temperament and capacity, was peculiarly fitted to understand the book, and to convey its message, by means of the vehicle of

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Art, to the eyes and minds of men. I refer to William Blake, a man of the most strange and unearthly genius, and one who lived always by preference in the world of spirits, being constantly very near to God. He wrote some delicate and exquisite poetry, at a time when poetry was rare in England. Latterly, his genius was obscured by the intrusion of his prophetic visions, which, wonderful as they are, lack the disciplined lucidity essential to Art, and so muddy the pure stream of his poetry. All his life long this visionary lived in obscurity, unrecognised by the world, whose coarse thumb could not test the greatness of the man or of his work. He moved among us, and yet was not of us ; it was his high privilege, as he claimed, to have converse with the spirits of the great and good. A story is told of Blake by a lady who was taken to see him when she was quite a little girl. He stroked her head and ringlets and said to her :—" May God make this world to you, my child, as beautiful as it has been to me." In his *Vision of the Last Judgment* he says "' What ! ' it will be questioned, ' when the sun rises, do you not see a round disc of fire somewhat like a guinea ? ' Oh ! no, no ! I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host, crying, ' Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty ! ' I question not my corporeal eye any more than I would question a window concerning a sight. I look through it and not with it."

It will be seen that no fitter person could be found to illustrate the Book of Job. These illustrations, which he rightly called *Inventions*, were done by him about the year 1823, when he did twenty-one water-colour drawings for his patron, Mr. Butts. Mr. Linnell, the artist, engaged Blake to execute and engrave a duplicate set. For these, and the copyright, he paid Blake £150. " No profits," says Mr. Gilchrist, Blake's biographer, " were realized by the engravings, their sale hardly covering expenses." Such was the contemporary judgment on these supreme works of art. Regarding their artistic value, nothing need here be said. If they do not commend themselves to those who study them, no words can reveal their beauties. Those who find them merely awkward and ugly lose something

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that no teaching can give them. These engravings rank among the greatest works that Art has given to the world, and are a treasure for all time. Blake has not only illustrated the Book of Job, but he has added something to it, something which the Book of Job evoked from his lofty soul.

Before saying a few words to help to the comprehension of the Inventions, something should be said on two points.

First, then, it may be objected that Blake actually attempts to depict the Almighty by means of the human figure. In answer it should be said that Blake knew better than we how impossible it is to depict the Almighty by means of the forms of Art. He uses the human form simply as a symbol of God. It is a necessity of the pictorial art that it must represent all its conceptions by means of form ; where the conceptions become too high and spiritual, Art must employ material symbols of some kind. This is all that Blake does. And if he does represent God by means of the symbol of human form, is he not following the teaching of Holy Scripture, in which we are taught that God, in order to reveal Himself to men, assumed the form of a man in the Person of His Son Jesus Christ ?

It may be objected, further, that the drawing, especially of some of the figures, is at times stiff and awkward. This may be freely admitted ; it is the most noticeable fault of the man. He never quite overcame the tendency which he had to draw these stiff figures, with their stiffly-outstretched arms. But it is easy for us to admit the fault, and yet not suffer it to spoil our enjoyment of the greatness of these pictures ; and we might note that there is something even in this fault that is captivatingly simple and *naïve*. And when we make all necessary discount, the Inventions still remain supreme.

Turning now to the pictures, let us follow the story as Blake tells it, noting his comments on it both in text and in margin, as far as we can follow them. Each picture tells its story quite simply and intelligibly : and yet there is much in the details that might escape the careless eye. I have known them

Joshua to Job

for twenty years, and every time I come back to them I seem to perceive something fresh.

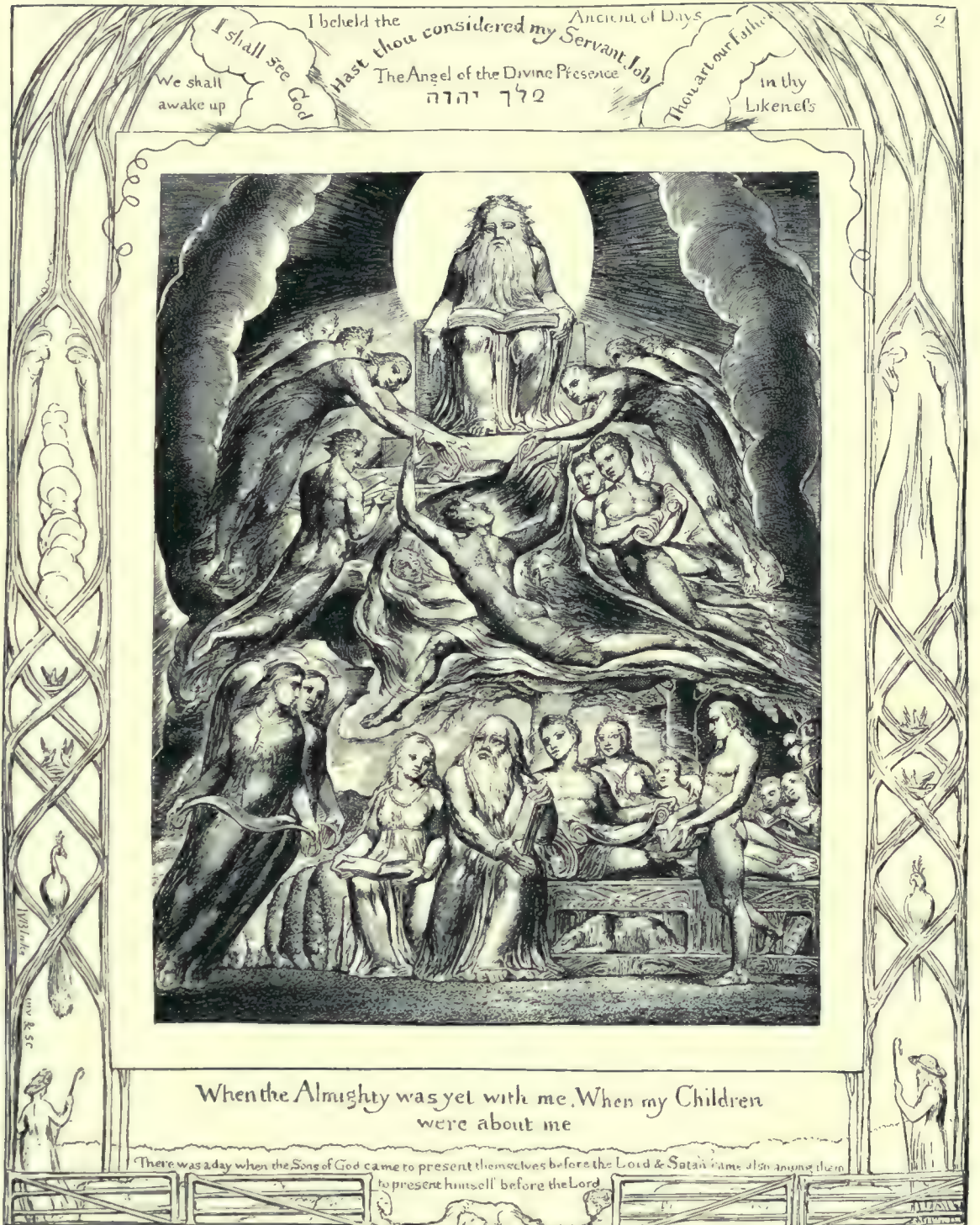
In the first picture, Job and his wife, with their family kneeling round about them, are seated under a tree, upon the boughs of which musical instruments are hung; they are engaged in family prayer, and upon the knees of the father and mother lie the open Scriptures. The sheep are pasturing or lying at rest: in the background, curiously inconsistent with the scene, rises a Gothic cathedral. The moon, with one white star for company, is rising on the left, whilst on the right the sun is going down in splendour. Blake seems to hint that for Job it will soon be night.

The second picture still shows us the family gathered together in peace and quietness. Two angels bring them messages of love and peace from the Almighty. The sun has gone down, but some lingering lustre of its departing still makes beautiful the western sky. Above, we see the courts of heaven. Clouds surround it. At the summit, framed against an oval of intensest light, the figure of God is seen, with the opened book laid upon His knee—the book in which man's deeds are recorded. The Satan, from whom the angels shrink back, appears in flame before God; in the fire which envelopes him we can discover the faces of Job and his wife, proof that he means harm to them. The picture is enclosed in a framework of lovely pastoral suggestions: shepherds, nesting birds, watching angels.

In the third picture, the Satan, full of devilish glee, pulls down the pillars of their house upon the children of Job. From the wings of the evil spirit shoot out those jagged flames which are henceforth to be the *leit-motif* of his presence. This is a creation of a vigour almost appalling in its strength.

In the fourth, Job is seen seated beneath his fig-tree, mourning along with his wife for their dead children. The sky is overhung and threatening. One messenger of disaster is just arriving, and two others are seen hastening up, one not far off and another in the extreme distance. In the margin above, we have a vivid sketch of the devil going to and fro on the earth.

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In the fifth picture there is still peace in the soul of Job, and he is seen giving of his poverty to a blind beggar. At either side a beautiful angel watches the scene. A bare and rocky country stretches behind, with a prehistoric stone erection instead of the Gothic temple. The sunset still lingers in the west. Below, all is peace ; above, all is disquiet. Once more the Satan appears, claiming this time to touch with evil plagues the body of Job. Once more, but far more markedly than on the former occasion, the angels shrink back from him in horror. The figure of the Almighty, the face full of pain, writhes on His seat, and the halo behind Him is half-eclipsed. Below, in the margin, a hideous serpent is coiled : at the sides, angels weep over the flames that rise, but cannot extinguish them.

In the sixth picture, the angel of evil, smiling hatefully, stands upon the prostrate form of the patriarch and pours from a vial the flames of disease upon his naked body. Job's wife weeps beside him with covered face, and in the background we can see the ruins of a building, which has probably been Job's own house. Obscene creatures and angels with bat-like wings are suggested in the margin.

A touch of relief is given us in the seventh picture. The light is broadening upon a strange wild country full of ruined dwellings. Job sits upon his heap, his face full of pain ; behind him stands his wife. The three friends approach him with outstretched hands quaintly awkward, and faces full of sympathy. The building behind Job suggests the appearance of a cross. In the margin are seen weeping angels and pensive shepherds.

In the eighth picture Job curses the day of his birth, whilst his wife and his friends kneel by his side and cover their faces. Rugged mountains rise behind, and smoky clouds fill the sky. Again we note in the stone erection behind him the suggestion of a cross. In the margin at the foot, fungi and poisonous plants appear.

The next picture is one of the most impressive of the series, dealing as it does with that world of spirits with which Blake was so familiar. Eliphaz describes a vision which he had

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in the watches of the night, and all the others look up as if they could see what he describes so vividly. Above, the vision is reproduced. Eliphaz is half sitting up in bed, his hair standing up in horror. A form of awful majesty passes before him, half veiled and half revealed "in a wondrous partition of light, cloud and mist of light." In the margin, terror-stricken trees droop and trail their branches to the ground.

In number ten, Job kneels in the foreground, a figure of great dignity and pathos. He appeals to his friends for pity, but appeals in vain. The friends stretch out pointing hands, and laugh him to scorn. Beside him crouches his wife, who touches him with insinuating finger and tempts him to curse God and die. In the margin are birds and beasts of the night, mourning figures, drooping chains and bat-like wings.

The next is a tremendous picture that might well haunt our dreams. The text subjoined is: "With dreams upon my bed thou scarest me and affrightest me with visions." Job is seen laid upon his bed, his face distorted with anguish of terror. Above him hangs a form with some suggestion in it of the figure of God, thrusting a glowing face close to his own. The form is wreathed around with a hideous serpent, and all about it glows and crackles the jagged flame. With one hand the figure points to the tables of the Law which Job has broken; with the other it points to the flames below of that hell which Job has deserved. Devils are clanking chains in the midst of the flames, and some reach up scaly claws to drag down the unhappy dreamer. Ellis and Yeats, in their monumental work on Blake, maintain that this figure is that of God disguised in diabolic form. I think this is a mistake. It seems to me that the figure is that of the devil, disguised as God. I hold this for three reasons. (1) The serpent and the jagged flame both suggest the devil. (2) The figure has a cloven hoof. (3) At the top of the page, Blake puts the text: "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light," and at the foot: "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or is worshipped."

Plate twelve shows the coming of Elihu. Peace is

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returning, and the faces of all are calm whilst the young man speaks. It is night, but a wonderful night of stars. At the foot, in the margin, Job is stretched out asleep, his soul looking up to the heavens and the stars. Angels, like lovely thoughts, are rising from his breast and filling the heavens with beauty and praise.

Plate thirteen represents God, a figure of surpassing majesty, appearing in the whirlwind. The spray of the whirlwind stirs the hair of Job, but he and his wife look up adoring and unafraid, whilst the friends are bowed down to the ground. The storm is continued into the margin, and at the foot is a tree beaten down to the ground.

The fourteenth is the most triumphantly beautiful of the series. It represents the Song of the Morning Stars. Note first the margin. At the top are the Pleiades and Orion's Belt, and two angels hold the bands of Orion. On each side the six days of creation are sketched in with great simplicity. At the foot is the Leviathan of the great deep. Then we turn to the picture itself. From below, Job and his friends look up wondering. In the centre, God sends out day and night, represented as Apollo with his coursers, and Artemis in her snake-drawn car. Above, four angels, evidently part of an unending row, sing praise with uplifted arms. Anything in Art more beautiful than these four angels, more expressive of the glory and joy of life, I do not know.

In number fifteen, God, reclined upon a cloud, points down to Behemoth, the land creature, and Leviathan, the sea beast, and the gaze of Job and his friends follows the pointing finger. The two animals are very striking creations. The subject of the sixteenth picture is the fall of the Satan from heaven. He is wreathed in jagged flame, and accompanied by two female figures, possibly Sin and Death. Job and his friends watch amazed, and the halo of the Almighty is all bright again and full of angels. This incident is not given in the book, but it is implied. In number seventeen, God, enveloped in that mist of light which Blake depicted so well, blesses Job and his wife, whilst the friends turn away their faces in dread. Job is permitted to see God.

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Note the female figure below, and the selection of texts from the Gospel of John. In the eighteenth, Job offers sacrifice for his friends. The sun is in the heavens and the great pointed flame rises up towards it from the altar. Evening light shows between the stems of the trees. In the margin, wheat is growing and angels are praising God. At the foot Blake has drawn his palette, and beside it he has set his name, as if he were well pleased with his work. In the next, Job sits again under his fig-tree. The valleys stand so thick with corn that they laugh and sing. He receives help from his friends and, to judge from his troubled face, this is a last trial. The margin is full of angels and palm trees.

In number twenty, Job sits in a new house with his three fair daughters and tells them the story of his life, which is depicted on the panels of the walls. The jagged lines of the Satanic flame are now used for purely decorative effect, as if to suggest that the evil is now changed into good. The margin is of angels and grape vines and instruments of music. In the last of all, Job and his family are gathered under a tree, as in the first picture. But they are standing now and the sun is rising. The sheep are couched about their feet. They play on many instruments, and make music of joy and gladness to the Most High God. Below, in the margin, flames an altar, with the significant inscription: "In burnt offerings for sin thou hast had no pleasure." And so the story ends in joy and peace.

These pictures are a joy for ever, because they came from a beautiful soul and appeal to all that is best in the souls of men.

J. MACARTNEY WILSON.

THE BOOK OF JOB

3

The Fire of God is

And the Lord said unto Satan Behold All that he hath is in thy Power

fallen from Heaven



Thy Sons & thy Daughters were eating & drinking Wine in their
eldest Brothers house & behold there came a great wind from the Wilderness
& smote upon the four faces of the house & it fell upon the young Men & they are Dead

W. Blake del. & sculp.

London, Published at the British Museum, March 8, 1827, by W. L. G. & J. P. G. From the Court of the

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THE BOOK OF JOB

4

And there came a Messenger unto Job & said the Oxen were plowing & the Sabeans came down & they have slain the Young Men with the Sword
 Going to & fro in the Earth
 & walking up & down in it



And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

While he was yet speaking
 there came also another & said

The fire of God is fallen from heaven & hath burned up the flocks & the
 Young Men & consumed them & I only am escaped alone to tell thee

W Blake invent & sculp

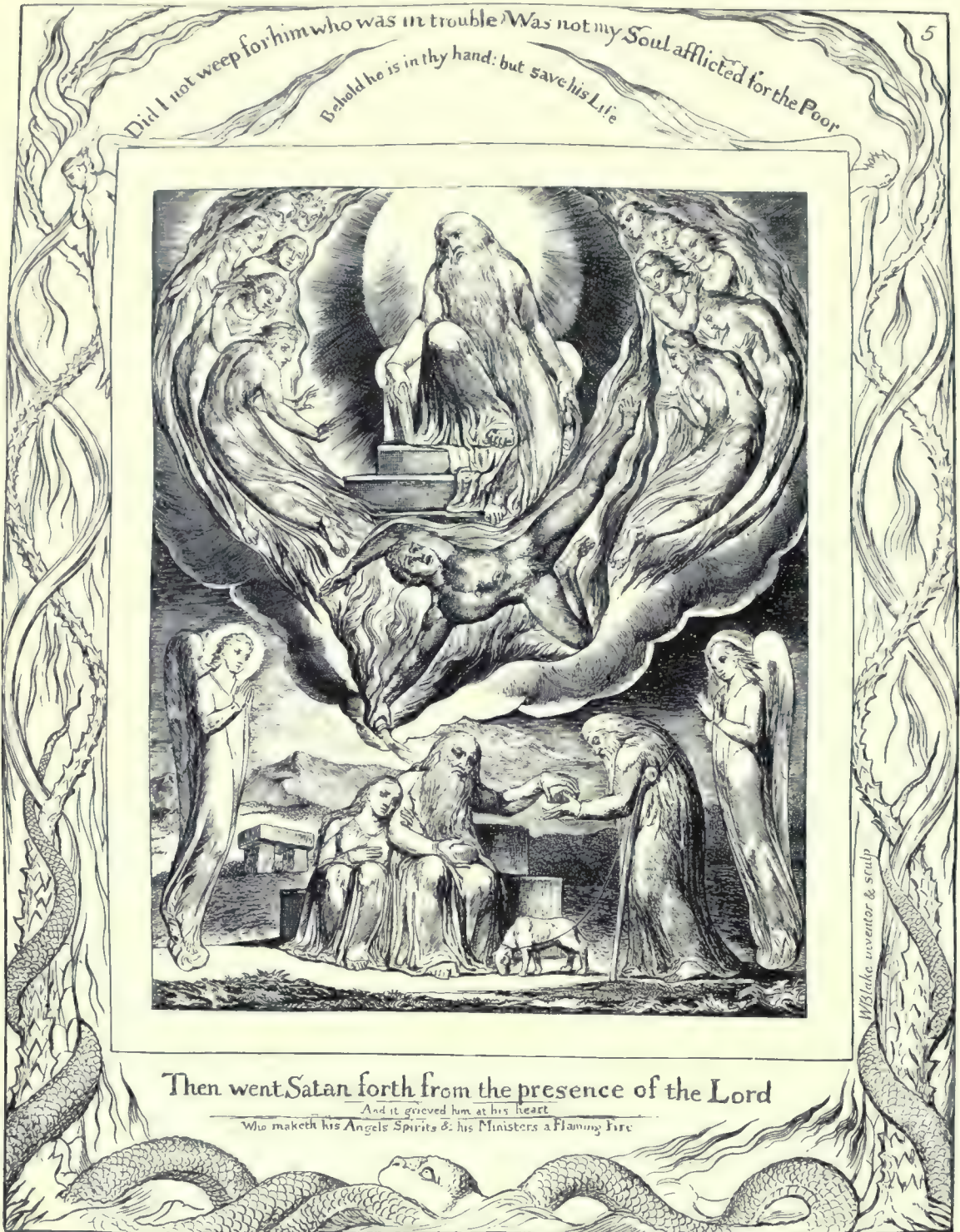
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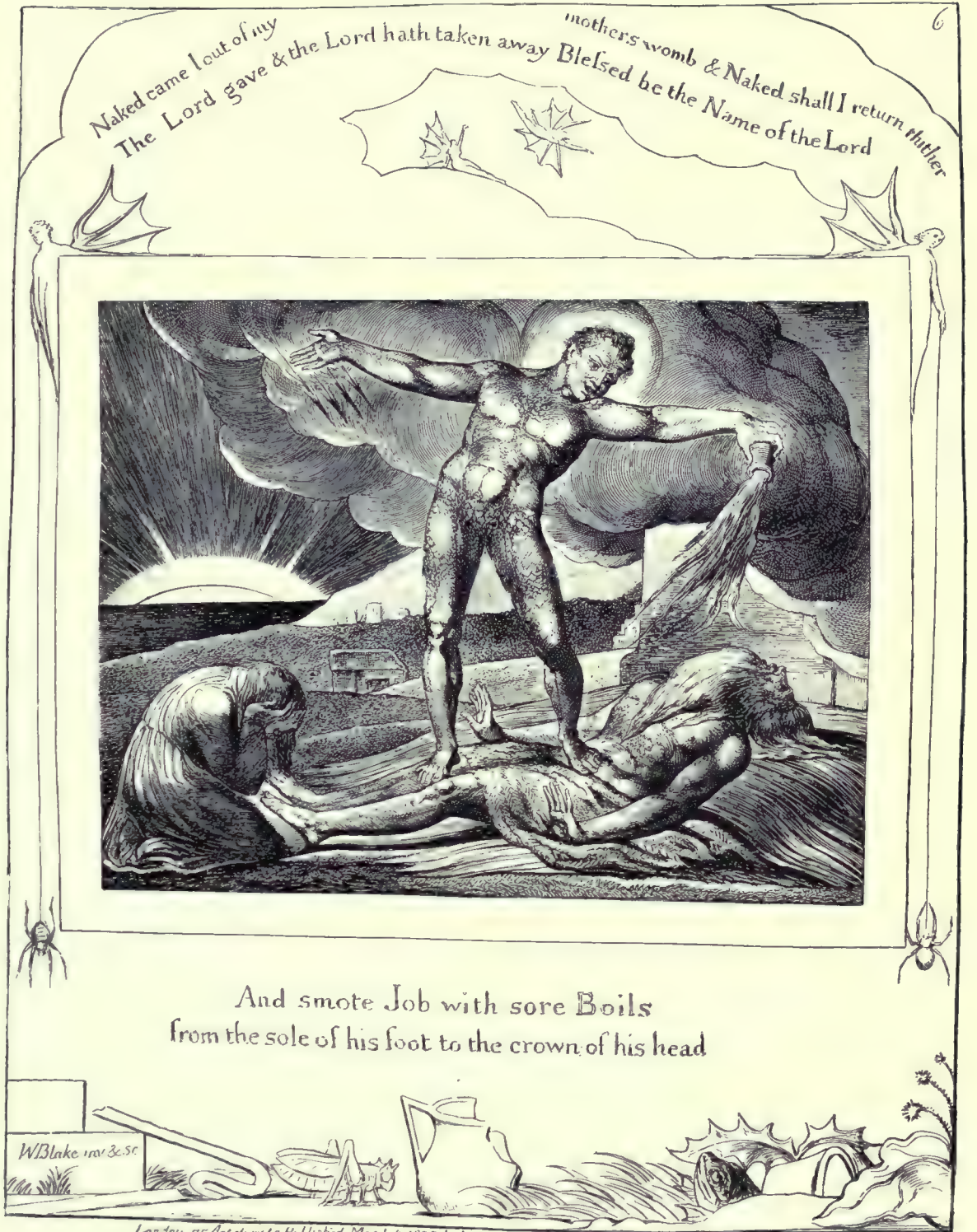
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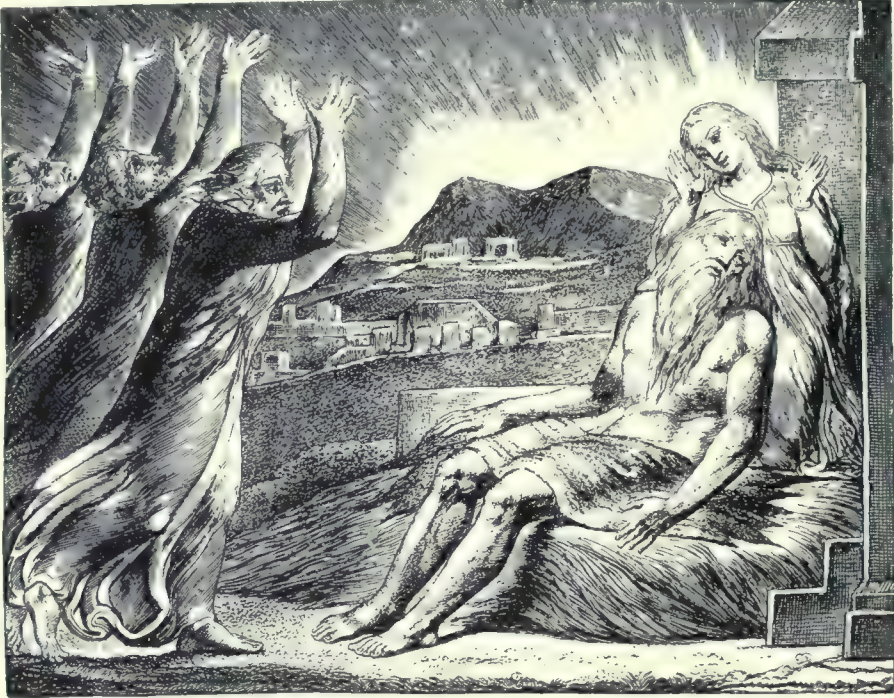


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THE BOOK OF JOB

7

What! shall we receive Good
at the hand of God & shall we not also
receive Evil



And when they lifted up their eyes afar off & knew him not
they lifted up their voice & wept. & they rent every Man his
mantle & sprinkled dust upon their heads towards heaven

Ye have heard of the Patience of Job and have seen the end of the Lord

W. Blake inven & sculpt.

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1757-1827

Lo let that night be solitary
& let no joyful voice come therein



Let the Day perish wherein I was Born

And they sat down with him upon the ground seven days & seven
nights & none spake a word unto him for they saw that his grief
was very great

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10

But he knoweth the way that I take
 when he hath tried me I shall come forth like gold
 Have pity upon me: Have pity upon me: O ye my friends
 for the hand of God hath touched me
 Though he slay me yet will I trust in him



The Just Upright Man is laughed to scorn

Man that is born of a Woman is of few days & full of trouble
 he cometh up like a flower & is cut down he fleeth also as a shadow
 & continueth not And dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one
 & bringest me into judgment with thee

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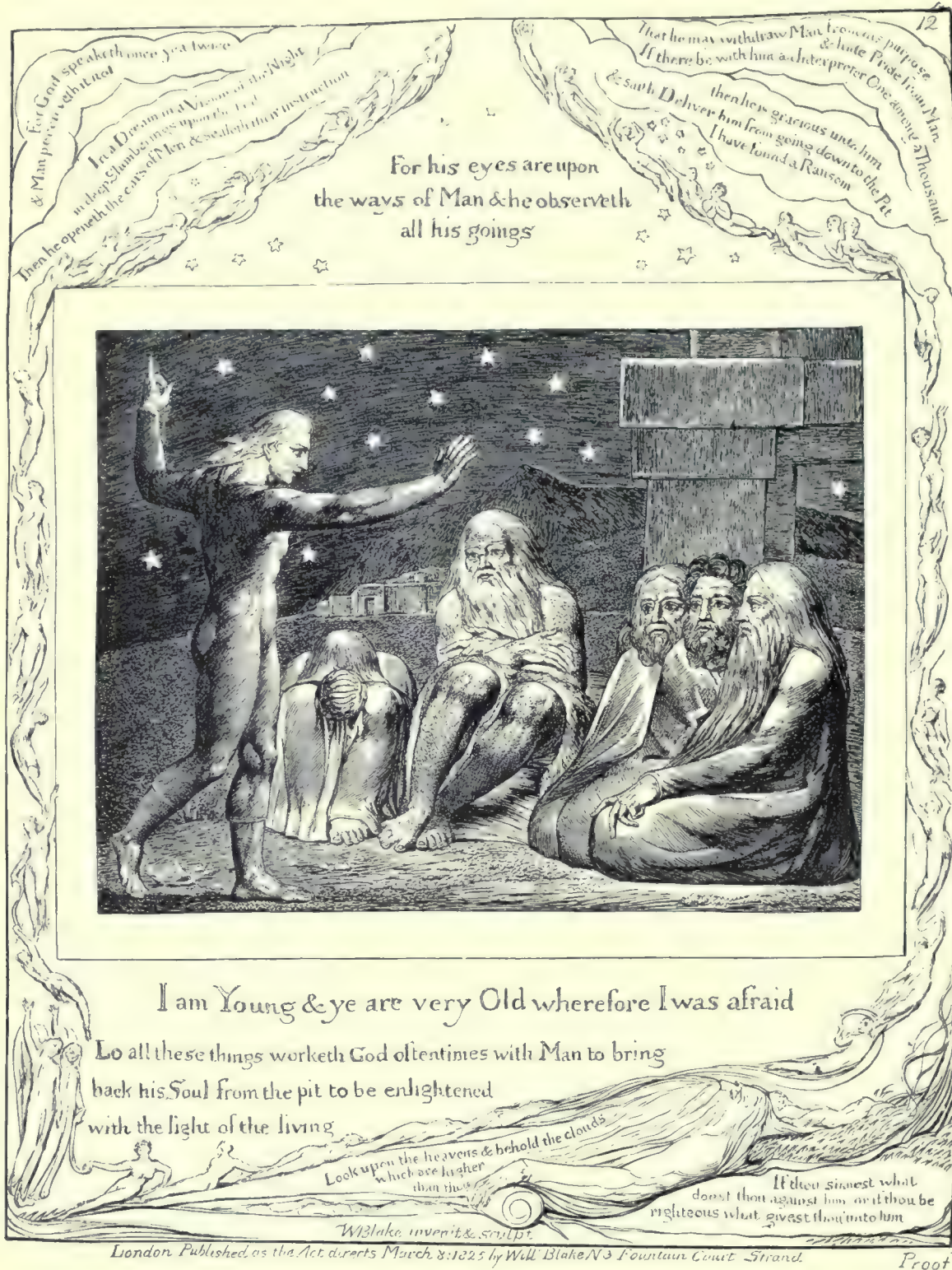
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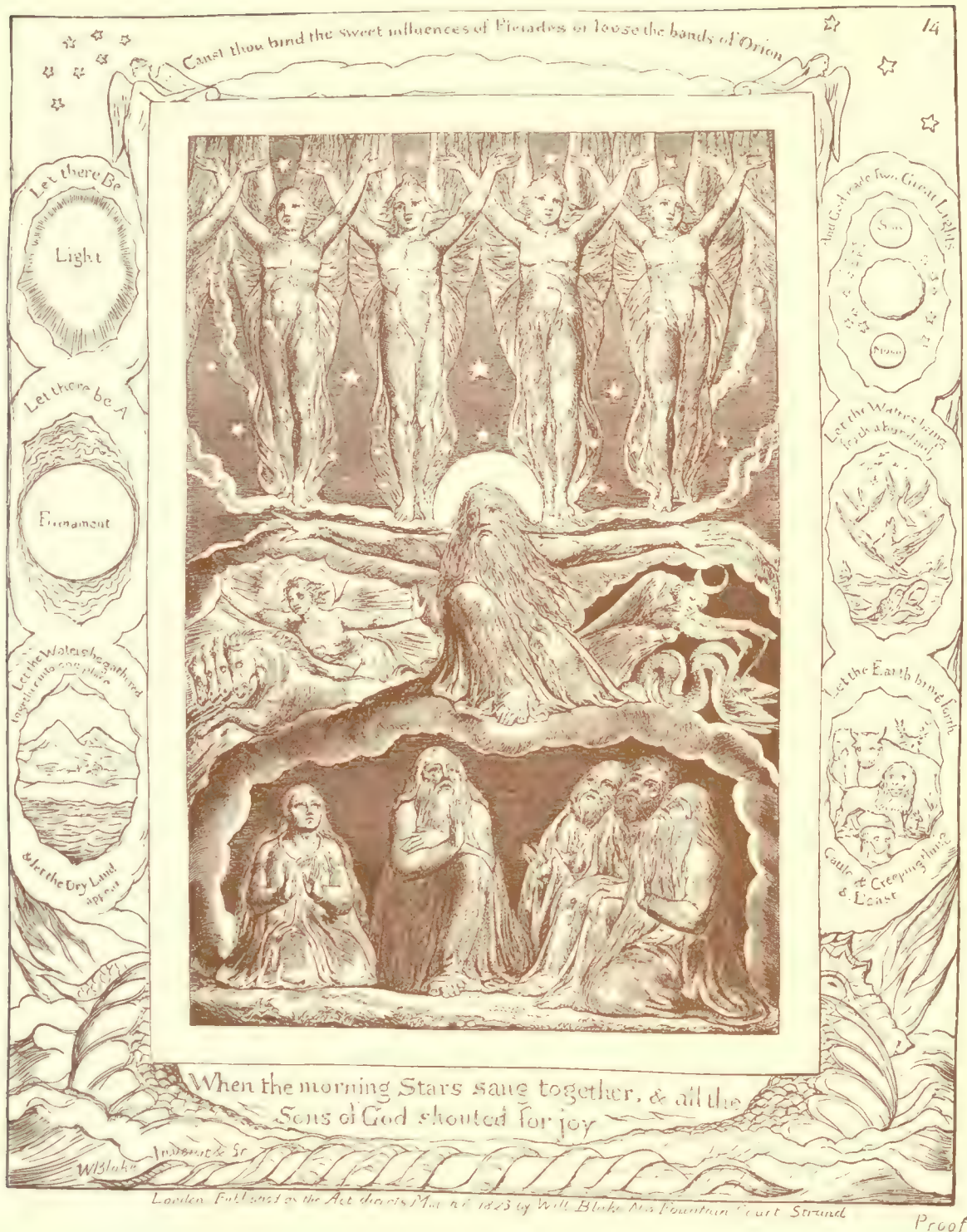
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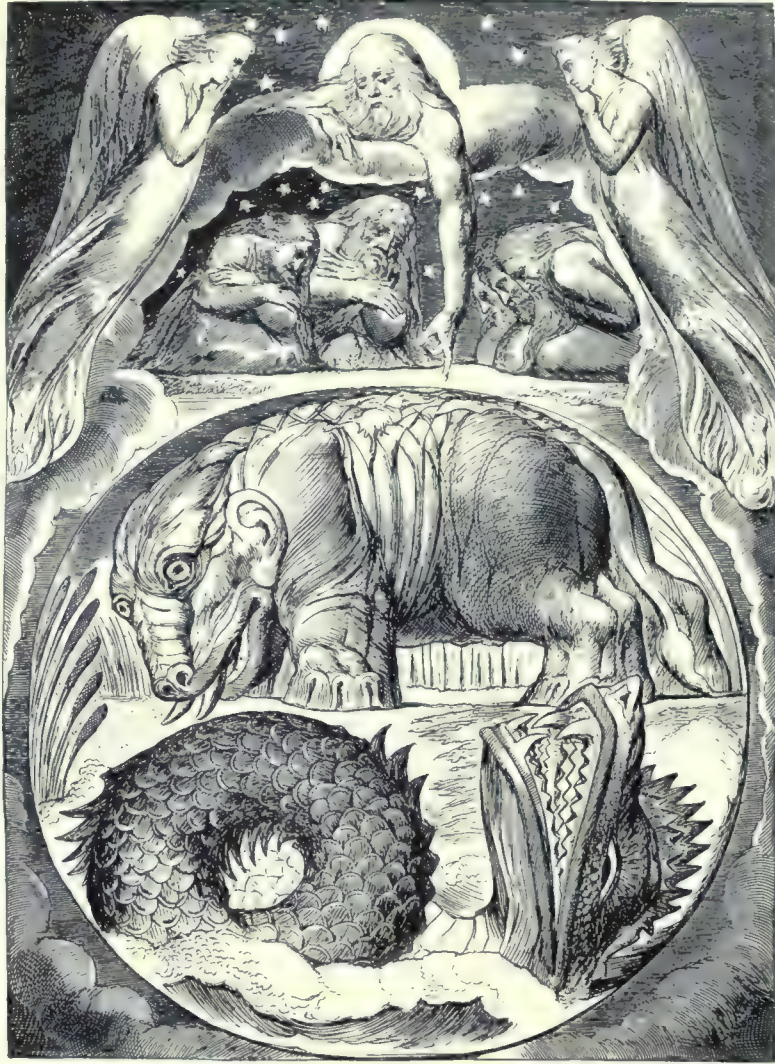
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THE BOOK OF JOB

Can any understand the spreadings of the Clouds
the noise of his Tabernacle

15

Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud
He scattereth the bright cloud also it is turned away by his counsels



Of Behemoth he saith, He is the chief of the ways of God
Of Leviathan he saith, He is King over all the Children of Pride

Behold now Behemoth which I made with thee

W. Blake invent & sculpt

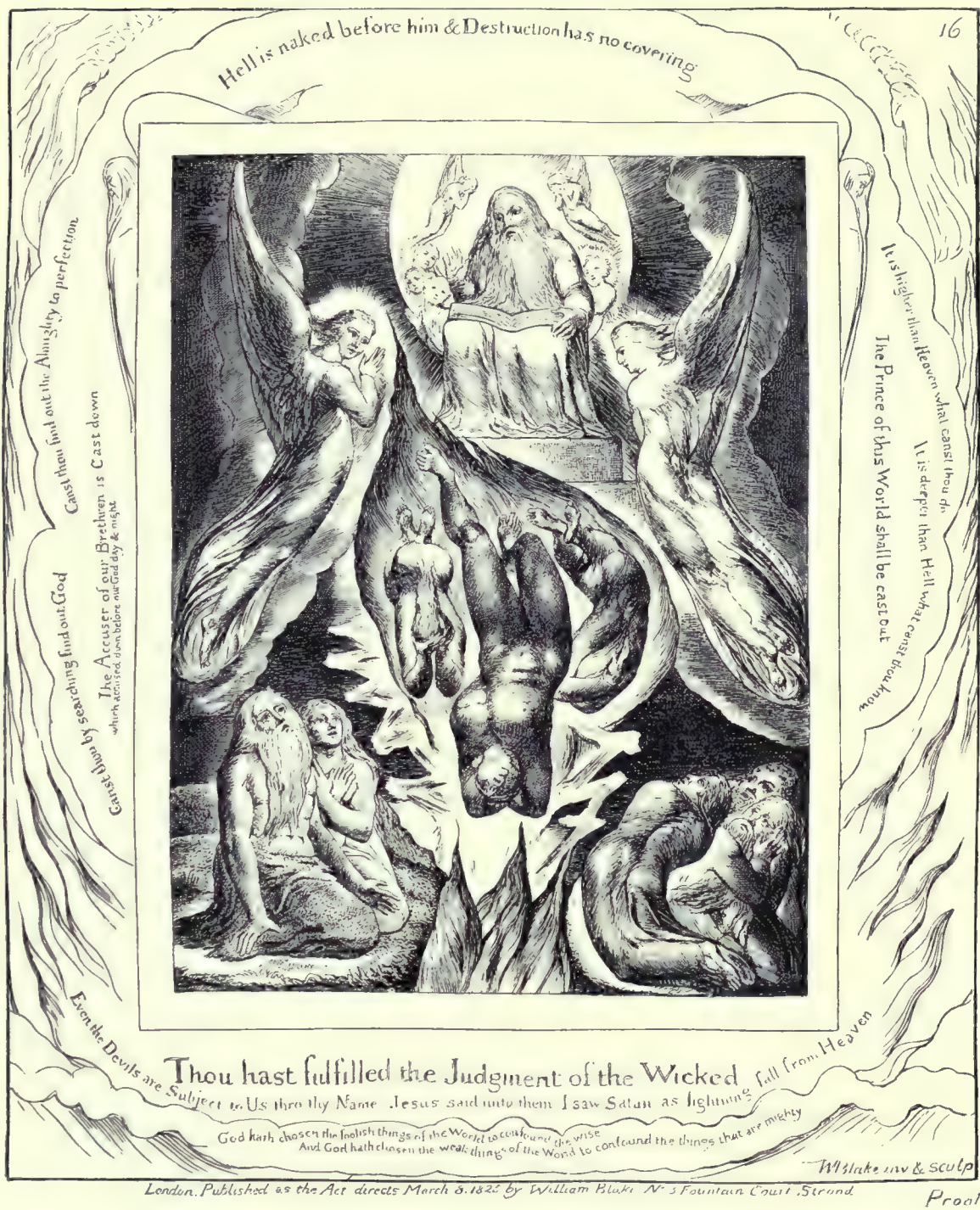
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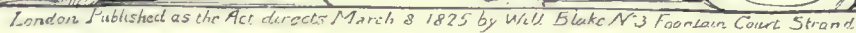
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18



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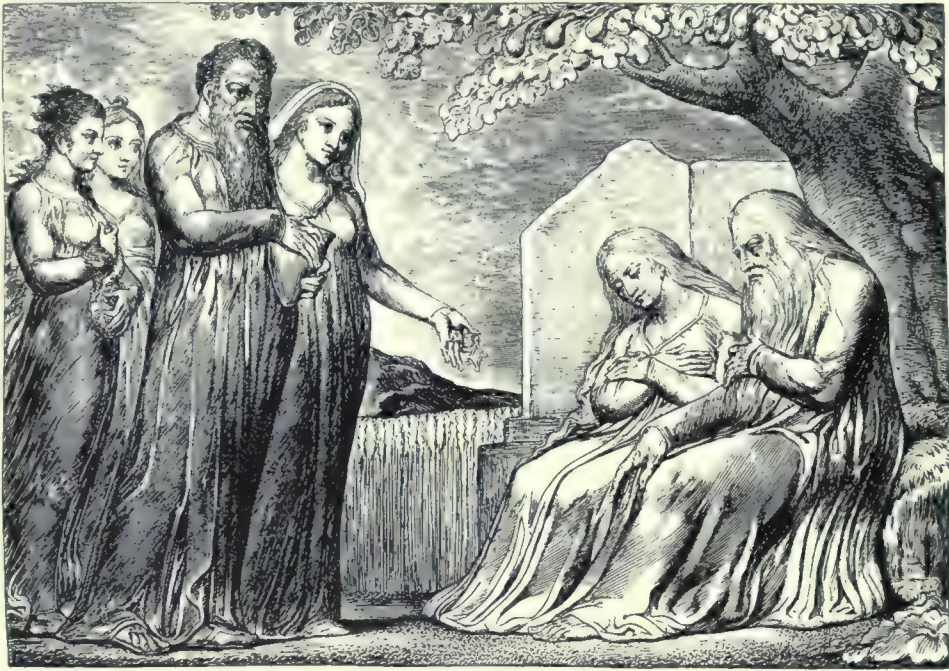
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19

The Lord maketh Poor & maketh Rich

He bringeth Low & Lifteth Up

who provideth for the
Raven his Food
When his young ones cry unto God.



Every one also gave him a piece of Money

Who remembered us in our low estate
For his Mercy endureth forever

W. Blake inv & sculp

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THE BOOK OF JOB

20

How precious are thy thoughts
unto me O God
how great is the sum of them



There were not found Women fair as the Daughters of Job
in all the Land & their Father gave them Inheritance
among their Brethren

If I ascend up into Heaven thou art there
If I make my bed in Hell behold Thou
art there

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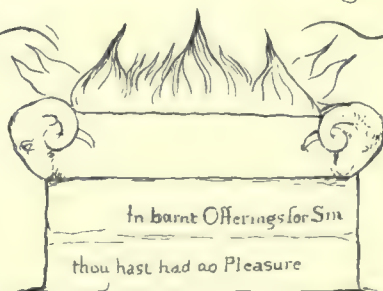
Great & Marvellous are thy Works
Lord God Almighty

Just & True are thy Ways
O thou King of Saints



So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job
more than the beginning

After this Job lived
an hundred & forty years
& saw his Sons & his
Sons Sons



even four Generations
So Job died
being old
& full of days



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